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A GENTLEMAN.

BY

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To

All Boys who want to Make

Life Cheerful.

Preface.

In offering this little book to that public for which it is intended—a public made up of young men from fifteen to twenty years of age—the author fears that he may seem presumptuous. He intends to accentuate what most of them already know, not to teach them any new thing. And if he appear to touch too much upon the trifles of life, it is because experience shows that it is the small things of our daily intercourse with our fellow-beings which make the difference between success and failure. He gratefully acknowledges his obligation to the Reverend editor of the *Ave Maria* for permission to use in the last part of this volume several of the "Chats with Good Listeners."

The University of Notre Dame,
February 2, 1893.

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A GENTLEMAN.

I. The Need of Good Manners.

I HAVE been asked to refresh your memory and to recall to your mind the necessity of certain little rules which are often forgotten in the recurrent interest of daily life, but which, nevertheless, are extremely important parts of education. There are rules made by society to avoid friction, to preserve harmony, and perhaps to accentuate the immense gulf that lies between the savage and the civilized man. But, trifling as they seem, you will be handicapped in your career in life if you do not know them. Good manners are good manners everywhere in civilization; etiquette is not the same everywhere. The best manners come from

the heart; the best etiquette comes from the head. But the practice of one and the knowledge of the other help to form that combination which the world names a gentleman, and which is described by the adjective well-bred.

For instance, if a man laughs at a mistake made by another in the hearing of that other, he commits a solecism in good manners—he is thoughtless and he appears heartless; but if he wears gloves at the dinner-table and persists in keeping them on his hands while he eats, he merely commits a breach of etiquette. Society, which makes the rules that govern it, will visit the latter offence with more severity than the former.

Some young people fancy that when they leave school they will be free,—free to break or keep little rules. But it is a mistake: if one expects to climb in this world, one will find it a severe task; one can never be independent of social restrictions unless one become a tramp or flee to the wilds of Africa. But even there they have etiquette, for one of Stanley's officers tells us that some

Africans must learn to spit gracefully in their neighbor's face when they meet.

I do not advise the stringent keeping of the English etiquette of introductions. At Oxford, they say, no man ever notices the existence of another until he is introduced; and they tell of one Oxford man who saw a student of his own college drowning. "Why did you not save him?" "How could I?" demanded this monster of etiquette; "I had never been introduced to him."

Boys at school become selfish in the little things, and they seem to be more selfish than they really are. Every young man is occupied with his own interest. If a man upsets your coffee in his haste to get at his own, you probably forgive him until you get a chance to upset his. There is no time to quarrel about it,—no code among you which in the outside world would make such a reprisal a reason for exile from good society.

When you get into this outside world you will perhaps be inclined to overrate the small observances which you now look on with indifference as unnecessary to be prac-

tised. But either extreme is bad. To be boorish, rough, uncouth, is a sin against yourself and against society; to be too exquisite, too foppish, too "dudish,"—if I may use a slang word,—is only the lesser of two evils. Society may tolerate a "dude;" but it first ignores and then evicts a boor.

A famous Queen of Spain once said that a man with good manners needs no other letter of introduction. And it is true that good manners often open doors to young men which would otherwise be closed, and make all the difference between success and failure. This recalls to my mind an instance which, if it be not true, has been cleverly invented. It is an extreme case of self-sacrifice, and one which will hardly be imitated.

It happened that not long ago there lived in Washington a young American, who had been obliged to leave West Point because of a slight defect in his lungs. He was poor. He had few friends, and an education, which fortunately had included the practice of good manners. It happened that he was invited out to dinner; and he was seated

some distance from the Spanish Ambassador,—who had the place of honor; for the etiquette of the table is very rigid,—but within reach of his eye. Just as the salad was served the hostess grew suddenly pale, for she had observed on the leaf of lettuce carried to this young man a yellow caterpillar. Would he notice it? Would he spoil the appetite of the other guests by calling attention to it, or by crushing it? The Ambassador had seen the creature, too, and he kept his eye on the young man, asking himself the same questions.

The awful moment came: the young man's plate of salad was before him; the hostess tried to appear unconcerned, but her face flushed. Our young man lifted the leaf, caught sight of the caterpillar, paused half a second, and then heroically swallowed lettuce, caterpillar and all! The hostess felt as if he had saved her life.

After dinner, the Ambassador asked to be introduced to him. A week later he was sent to Cuba as English secretary to a high official there. The climate has suited him;

his health is restored; and he has begun a career under the most favorable auspices.

You know the story of Sir Walter Raleigh and the cloak. Sir Walter was poor, young, and without favor at court. One day Queen Elizabeth hesitated to step on a muddy place in the road; off came Sir Walter's new cloak,—his best and only one,—all satin and velvet and gold lace. Down it went as a carpet for the Queen's feet, and his fortune was made.

But neither our West-Pointer nor Sir Walter would have made his fortune by his good manners if he had not disciplined himself to be thoughtful and alert.

On the other hand, many a man has lost much by inattention to the little rules of society. One of the best young men I ever knew failed to get certain letters of introduction, which would have helped him materially, because he would wear a tall hat and a sack coat, or a low hat and a frock coat. Society exacts, however, that a man shall do neither of these things. Remember that I do not praise the social code that exacts so

much attention to trifles,—I only say that it exists.

Prosper Mérimée lost his influence at the court of Napoleon the Third by a little inattention to the etiquette which exacts in all civilized countries that a napkin shall not be hung from a man's neck, but shall be laid on his knee. Mérimée, who was a charming writer, very high in favor with the Empress Eugenie, was invited to luncheon in her particular circle one day. He was much flattered, but he hung his napkin from the top button of his coat; the Empress imitated his example, for she was very polite, but she never asked him to court again. It is the way of the social world—one must follow the rules or step out.

If a man chooses to carry his knife to his mouth instead of merely using it as an implement for cutting, he is at perfect liberty to do so. He may not succeed in chopping the upper part of his head off, but he will succeed in cutting himself off from the "Dress Circle of Society," as Emerson phrases it. Apart from the first considera-

tion that should govern our manners,—which is, that Our Lord Jesus Christ means that, in loving our neighbors as ourselves, we should show them respect and regard,—you must remember that politeness is power, and that for the ambitious man there is no surer road to the highest places in this land, and in all others, than through good manners. You may gain the place you aim for, but, believe me, you will keep it with torture and difficulty if you begin now by despising and disregarding the little rules that have by universal consent come to govern the conduct of life. One independent young person may thrust his knife into his mouth with a large section of pie on it, if he likes: you can put anything into a barn that it will hold, if the door be wide enough. They tell me that in Austria some of the highest people eat their sauerkraut with the points of their knives. But we do not do it here, and we must be governed by the rules of our own society. Some of you who always want to know the reason for rules, may ask why are we permitted to eat cheese

with our knives after dinner. I can only answer that I do not know and I do not care. The subject is not important enough for discussion. Good society all over the English-speaking world permits the use of the knife only in eating cheese. Some people prefer to take it with their fingers, like olives, asparagus, artichokes, and undressed lettuce. So generally is this small rule observed, that a very important discovery was made not very long ago through a knowledge of it. An adventurer claiming to be a French duke was introduced to an American family. He was well received, until one day he tried to spear an olive with his knife. As this is not a habit of good society, he was quietly dropped —very fortunately for the family, as he was discovered to be a forger and ex-convict.

You may ask, Why are olives, lettuce, and asparagus often eaten with the fingers? I can only answer, that it is a custom of civilized society. You may ask me again, Why must we break our bread instead of cutting it? And why must we take a fork to eat pie, when we are permitted to

eat asparagus and lettuce with our fingers? I say again that I do not know: all that I know is, that these social rules are fixed, and that it is better to obey than to lose time in asking why.

But if you should happen to be of a doubting turn of mind, accept an invitation to dinner from some person for whose social standing you have much respect, and then if your hostess in the kindness of her heart serves pie, take half of it in your right hand, close your eyes, bite a crescent of it in your best manner, and observe the effect on the other guests. You may be quite certain that if you desire not to be invited again to that house you will have your wish. Society in this country is becoming more and more civilized and exacting every year; and you will simply put a mark of inferiority on yourself in its eyes if you disregard rules which are trifles in themselves, but very important in their effect.

A young man's fate in life may be decided by a badly-written letter or a well-written one, by a rough gesture, by an oath or an

unclean phrase uttered when he thinks no one is listening. But let us remember that there is always some one looking or hearing; for, and this is an axiom, there are no secrets in life.

Emerson says, writing of "Behavior:" "Nature tells every secret over. Yes, but in man she tells it all the time, by form, attitude, gesture, mien, face and parts of the face, and by the whole action of the machine. The visible carriage or action of the individual, as resulting from his organization and his will combined, we call manners. What are they but thought entering the hands and feet, controlling the movements of the body, the speech and behavior?"

Of the power of manners Emerson further says: "Give a boy address and accomplishments, and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes wherever he goes. He has not the trouble of earning them."

And in another place: "There are certain manners which are learned in good society of such force that, if a person have them, he

or she must be considered and is everywhere welcome, though without beauty or wealth or genius."

Cardinal Newman, in his definition of a gentleman, does not forget manners, though he lays less stress on their power for worldly advancement than Emerson does. Good manners are, in the opinion of the great cardinal, the outward signs of true Christianity. Etiquette is the extreme of good manners. A man may be a good Christian and expectorate, spit, sprinkle, spray, diffuse tobacco-juice right and left. But the man who will do that, though he have a good heart and an unimpeachable character, is not a gentleman in the world's meaning of the term, for *with the world* it is not the heart that counts, but the manners. You may keep your hat on your head if you choose when you meet a clergyman or a lady. You need not examine your conscience about it, and you will find nothing against it in the Constitution of the United States; you may be on your way to give your last five dollars to the poor or to visit a sick neighbor; but,

by that omission you stamp yourself at once as being outside the sacred circle in which society includes gentlemen. You can quote a great many fine sentiments against me, if you like ; you may say, with Tennyson,

> "Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood."

God keep us from thinking otherwise ; but, if one get into a habit of disregarding the small rules of etiquette, if one use one's fork for a toothpick, drink out of one's finger-bowl, reach over somebody's head for a piece of bread, all the kind hearts and simple faith in the world will not keep you in the company of well-bred people. You may answer that some very good persons blow their soup with their breath, stick their own forks into general dishes, and—the thing has been done once perhaps in some savage land—wipe their noses with their napkins. But if these good people paid more attention to the little things of life, their goodness would have more power over others. As it is, virtue loses half its charm when it ignores good manners.

It is only old people and men of great genius who can afford to disregard manners. Old people are privileged. If they choose to eat with their knives or with their napkins around their necks,—a thing which is no longer tolerated,—the man who remarks on it, who shows that he notices it, who criticises it, is not only a boor, but a fool. Young people have no such privileges: they must acquire the little habits of good society or they will find every avenue of cultivation closed to them.

The only time they are privileged to violate etiquette is when some older person does it: then they had better follow a bad form than rebuke him by showing superiority in manners.

It is foolish to appear to despise the little rules that govern the conduct of life. This appearance of contempt for observances which have become part of the every-day existence of well-regulated people, arises either from selfishness or ignorance. The selfish man does not care to consider his neighbors; but his selfishness is very short-

sighted, because his neighbors, whose feelings and rights he treats as non-existent, will soon force the consideration of them on him.

A young man may think it a fine thing to be independent in social matters. He will soon find that he cannot afford in life to be independent of anything except an evil influence. If he prefers the society of loungers in liquor-saloons or at hotel-bars, he needs nothing but a limitless supply of money. His friends there require the observance of only one rule of etiquette—he must "treat" regularly. To young men who hunger for that kind of independence and that sort of friends I have nothing to say, except that it is easy to prophesy their ruin and disgrace. If a man has no better ambition than to die in an unhonored grave or to live forsaken in an almshouse, let him make up his mind to be "independent." The world in which you will live is exacting, and you can no more succeed and defy its exactions than you can stick your finger into a fire and escape burning.

Even in the question of clothes—which

seems to most of us entirely our own affair—society exacts obedience. You cannot wear slovenly clothes to church, for instance, and expect to escape the indignation of your dearest friends.

In the most rigid of European countries, if one happens to be presented to the king one wears no gloves: one would as soon think of wearing gloves as of wearing a hat. Similarly, according to the strictest etiquette in European countries, people generally take off their gloves at the Canon of the Mass, and, above all, when they approach the altar, because they are in the special presence of God, the King of heaven and earth. How different is the practice of some of us! We lounge into church as we would into a gymnasium, with no outward recognition of the Presence of God except a "dip" towards the tabernacle or an occasional and often inappropriate thumping of the stomach, which is, I presume, supposed to express devotion.

It is as easy to bring a flower touched by the frost back to its first beauty as to restore conduct warped by habit. And so, if you

want to acquire good manners that will be your passport to the best the world has, begin now by guarding yourself from every act that may infringe on your neighbor's right, from every word that will give him needless pain, and from every gesture at table which may interfere with his comfort. We cannot begin to discipline ourselves too soon; it is good, as the Scripture says, "that a man bear the yoke when he is young."

Social rules, as I said, are very stringent on the seemingly unimportant matter of clothes: so a man must not wear much jewelry, under pain of being considered vulgar. He may wear a pin, or a ring, or a watch-chain, if he likes; but for a young man, the less showy these are, the better. It may be said that there are a great many people who admire diamonds, and who like to see many of them worn. This is true; but if a young man puts a small locomotive headlight in his bosom, or gets himself up in imitation of a pawnbroker's window, he may be suspected of having robbed a bank. It is certain that

he will show very bad taste. Lord Lytton, the author of "Pelham," who was a great social authority, says that a man ought to wear no jewelry unless it is exquisitely artistic or has some special association for the wearer.

If a young man is invited to a dinner or to a great assembly in any large city, he must wear a black coat. A gray or colored coat worn after six o'clock in the evening, at any assembly where there are ladies, would imply either disrespect or ignorance on the part of the wearer. In most cities he is expected to wear the regulation evening dress, the "swallow-tail" coat of our grandfathers, and, of course, black trousers and a white tie. In London or New York or Chicago a man must follow this last custom or stay at home. He has his choice. The "swallow-tail" coat is worn after six o'clock in the evening, never earlier, in all English-speaking countries. In France and Spain and Italy and Germany it is worn as a dress of ceremony at all hours. No man can be presented to the Holy Father unless he wears the "swal-

low-tail," so rigid is this rule at Rome, though perhaps an exception might be made under some circumstances.

In our country, where the highest places are open to those who deserve them, a young man is foolish if he does not prepare himself to deserve them. And no man can expect to be singled out among other men if he neglects his manners or laughs at the rules which society makes. Speaking from the spiritual or intellectual point of view, there is no reason why a man should wear a white linen collar when in the society of his fellows; from the social point of view there is every reason, for he will suffer if he does not. Besides, he owes a certain respect to his neighbors. A man should dress according to circumstances: the base-ball suit or the Rugby flannels are out of place in the dining-room or the church or the parlor, and the tall hat and the dress suit are just as greatly out of place in the middle of the game on the playground. Good sense governs manners; but when in doubt, we should remember that there are certain social rules which, if learnt

and followed, will serve us many mortifications and even failures in life.

No man is above politeness and no man below it. Louis the Fourteenth, a proud and autocratic monarch, always raised his hat to the poorest peasant woman; and a greater man than he, George Washington, wrote the first American book of etiquette.

II. Rules of Etiquette.

THE social laws that govern the Etiquette of Entertainments of all kinds are as stringent and as well defined as any law a judge interprets for you. It may be thought that one may do as he pleases at the theatre, in a concert-room, or at a dinner-party; that little breaches of good manners will pass unobserved or be forgiven because the person who commits them is young. This is a great mistake. More is expected from the young than the old; and if a young man comes out of college and shows that he is ignorant of the rules of etiquette which all well-bred people observe, he will be looked on as badly brought up. There are certain finical rules which are made from time to time, which live a brief space and are heard of no more. The English, who generally set the fashion in these things, call these non-essentials "fads." They are made to be forgotten.

For a time it had become a fashionable "fad" to use the left hand as much as possible, in saluting to take off one's hat with the left hand, to eat one's soup with the left hand; but this is all nonsense. Not long ago, in New York, every "dude" turned up the bottoms of his trousers in all sorts of weather, because in London everybody did it. Other fads were the carrying of a cane, handle down, and the holding of the arms with the elbows stuck out on both sides of him. Another importation of the Anglomaniacs was the habit of putting American money into pounds, shillings, and pence, for people who had been so long abroad could not be expected to remember their own currency. Another pleasant importation is the constant repetition of "don't you know." But they are all silly fashions, that may do for that class of "chappies" whose most serious occupation is that of sucking the heads of their canes, or of reducing themselves to idiocy with the baleful cigarette, or considering how pretty the girls think they are—but not for men.

The rules held by sane people all over the English-speaking world are those one ought to follow, not the silly follies of the hour, which stamp those who adopt them as below the ordinary level of human beings.

Let us imagine that you have been sent to Washington on business. I take Washington because it is the capital of the United States, and, if you do the right thing according to social rules there, you will do the right thing everywhere else. So you are going to Washington, where you will see one of the most magnificent domes in the world and the very beautiful bronze gates of the Capitol, a building about which we do not think enough because it happens to be in our own country. If it were in Europe, we should be flocking over in droves to see it.

Some kind friend gives you a letter of introduction to a friend of his. You accept it with thanks, of course. It is unsealed, because no gentleman ever seals a letter of introduction. You read it and are delighted to find yourself complimented. Now, if you want to do the right thing, you will go to a

good hotel when you get to Washington; a *good* hotel—a hotel you can mention without being ashamed of it. It will pay to spend the extra money. And if a woman comes into the elevator as you are going up to your room,—I would not advise you to take a suite of rooms on the ground-floor,—lift your hat and do not put it on again until she goes out. You will send your letter of introduction to your friend's friend and wait until he acknowledges it.

But if you want to do the wrong thing, you will take the letter of introduction and your travelling bag and go at once to Mr. Smith's house. You may arrive at midnight; but never mind that,—people like promising young folk to come at any time. If the clocks are striking twelve, show how athletic you are by pulling the bell out by the wires. When the members of the family are aroused, thinking the house is afire, they will be so grateful to you, and then you can ask for some hot supper. This pleasing familiarity will delight them. It will show them that you feel quite at home. It will ruin you

eventually in the estimation of stupid people who do not want visitors at midnight—but you need not mind them, though they form the vast majority of mankind.

If you want to do the right thing, wait until Mr. Smith acknowledges your letter of introduction and asks you to call at his house. If the letter is addressed to his office, you may take it yourself and send it in to him. But you ought not to go to his house until he invites you. After he does this, call in the afternoon or evening—never in the morning, unless you are specially asked. A "morning call" in good society means a call in the afternoon. And a first call ought not to last more than fifteen minutes. Take your hat and cane into the parlor; you may leave overcoat and umbrella and overshoes in the hall. A young man who wants to act properly will not lay his cane across the piano or put his hat on a chair. The hat and stick ought to be put on the floor near him, if he does not care to hold them in his hands. If he leaves his hat in the hall, his hostess will think that he is going to spend

the day in her house. But if she insists on taking his hat from him, it will not do to struggle for it. Such devotion to etiquette might make a bad impression. Good feeling and common-sense must modify all rules; and if one's entertainers have the old-fashioned impressions that the first duty of hospitality is to grasp one's hat and cane, let them have them by all means; but do not take the sign to mean that you are to stay all day. A quarter of an hour is long enough for a first call.

"You must have had a delightful visitor this morning," one lady said to another. "He stayed over an hour. What did he talk about?" The other lady smiled sadly: "He told me how he felt when he had the scarlet fever, and all about his mother's liver-complaint."

Topics of conversation should be carefully chosen. Strangers do not want to see a man often who talks about his troubles, his illness, and his virtues. The more the "You" is used in general society and the less the "I," the better it will be for him who has the tact

to use it. There is no use in pretending that our troubles are interesting to anybody but our mothers. Other people may listen, but, depend upon it, they prefer to avoid a man with a grievance.

If the young man with the letter of introduction has made a good impression, he will probably be invited to dinner. And then, if he has been careless of little observances, he will begin to be anxious. Perhaps it will be a ceremonious dinner, too, where there will be a crowd of young girls ready to criticise in their minds every motion, and some older ladies who will be sure to make up their minds as to the manner in which he has been brought up at home or at college. And we must remember that our conduct when we get out into the world reflects credit or discredit on our homes or our schools.

If our young man is invited to luncheon, he will find it much the same as a dinner, except that it will take place some time between twelve and two o'clock; while a dinner in a city is generally given at six o'clock, but sometimes not till eight. The very

fashionable hour is nine. In Washington the time is from six to eight. If the dinner is to be formal—not merely a family dinner—our young stranger will get an invitation worded in this way:

Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson
request the pleasure of
Mr. James Brown's company at dinner,
On Thursday, June the Twentieth,
At seven o'clock.

Our young man should send an answer at once to this, and he must say Yes or No; and if Mr. James Brown "regrets that he cannot have the pleasure of accepting Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson's invitation to dinner on June the Twentieth, at seven o'clock," let him give a good reason. If he have a previous engagement, that is a good reason; if he will be out of town, that is a good reason; but he must answer the invitation at once, and say whether he will go or not. To invite to dinner is the highest social compliment one man can pay another, and it should be considered in that light. Of course if a young man considers himself so

brilliant that people must invite him to their houses, he may do as he pleases, but he will soon find himself alone in that opinion. It is not good looks or brilliancy of conversation that gains a man the right kind of friends: it is good manners. Conceit in young people is an appalling obstacle to their advancement. You remember the story of the New York college man who was rescued from drowning by a ferry-hand. The latter expressed his disgust with the reward he received, and one of the college man's friends asked him why he had not done more for his rescuer. "Done more?" he exclaimed,—he considered himself the handsomest man of his class,— "Done more! What could I do? Did not I give him my photograph, cabinet size?"

If a young man is shy, now will come his time of trials. But if he keeps in mind the few rules that regulate the etiquette of the dinner-table, he will have no reason to fear that he will make any important mistakes. If his hostess should ask him to take a lady in to dinner, he will offer her his left arm, so that his right may be free to adjust her chair,

and he will wait until his place is pointed out by the hostess. He will find it awkward if he should drop into the first seat he come to—for the laws of the dinner-table are regularity and beauty. We cannot all be beautiful, but we can move in obedience to good rules. It is important that the man received in society should not cover too much space with his feet; he ought to try to keep them together.

A dinner—that is, a formal dinner—generally opens with four or five oysters. The guest is expected to squeeze lemon on them and to eat them with an oyster-fork. If one man is tempted to saw an oyster in half with a knife, he had better resist the temptation and miss eating the oyster rather than commit so barbarous an outrage. A guest who would cut an oyster publicly in half is probably a cannibal who would cut up a small baby without remorse. A man must not ask for oysters twice.

After the oysters comes the soup. If the dinner party is small, the soup may be passed by guest to guest; but the waiter generally

serves it. It is a flagrant violation of good manners to ask for soup twice. It should be taken from the side of the spoon if the guest's mustache will permit it, and not from the tip. Soup is dipped from the eater, not toward him. Among the Esquimaux it is the fashion to smack the lips after every luscious mouthful of liquid grease; with us, people do not make any noise or smack their lips over anything they eat, no matter how good it is. In George Eliot's novel of "Middlemarch," Dorothea's sister's greatest objection to Mr. Causaban is that his mother had never taught him to eat soup without making a noise.

After the soup comes the fish. The young guest may not like fish, but he must pretend to eat it; it is bad manners not to pretend to eat everything set before one at a dinner. A little tact will help anybody to do it. No dish must be sent away with the appearance of having been untasted. It would be an insult to one's hostess not to seem to like everything she has offered us. And, as the chief duty of social intercourse is to give

pleasure and to spare pain, this little suggestion is most important.

On this point Mrs. Sherwood, an acknowledged authority on social matters, says: "First of all things, decline nothing. If you do not like certain kinds of food, it is a courtesy to your hostess to appear as if you did. You can take as little on your plate as you choose, and you can appear as if eating it, for there is always your bread to taste and your fork or spoon to trifle with, and thus conceal your unwillingness to partake of a disliked course." Fish is eaten with a fork in one hand and a piece of bread in the other. There was once a man who filled his mouth with fish and dropped the bones from his lips to his plate. He disappeared—and nobody asks where he has gone. If a bone does happen to get into the mouth, it can be quietly removed. The guest who puts his fingers ostentatiously into his mouth to take out the fish-bones he has greedily placed there might, under temptation, actually and savagely tilt over his soup plate to scoop up the last drop of the liquid.

The next course, after the fish, is the entrée; it may be almost anything. No well-bred man ever asks for a second helping of the sweetbreads, or chops, or whatever dish may form the entrée. It is eaten with the fork in the right hand and a piece of bread in the left. In England it is considered ill-bred to pass the fork from the left hand to the right; but we have not as yet become so expert in the use of the left hand, so we use our forks with the right. A guest who asks for a second portion of the entrée may find himself in the position of a certain Congressman who had never troubled himself about etiquette. He was invited to a state dinner at the White House. The courses were delayed by this genial legislator, who would be helped twice. When the roasts came on he turned to a lady, and in his amiable way said, with a fascinating smile, "No, I can't eat more; I'm full—up to here," he added, making a pleasant motion across his throat. It was probably the same Congressman who, seeing a slice of lemon floating in his finger-bowl, drank its contents, and swore

that it was the weakest lemonade he had ever tasted.

The roast comes after the entrée. Each course is eaten slowly, because the host wants to keep his guests in pleasant conversation at his table as long as possible. If the host helps our young guest to a slice of the roast, whatever flesh-meat or fowl it may be, the guest must not pass it to anybody else: he must keep it himself; it was intended for him. This rule does not apply to the soup and the fish and the entrées as it does to the roast. Suppose a guest wants his beef rare, or underdone, and I pass him the piece given to me by the host, because he knows I like it well-done: the consequence is that the guest next to me gets what he does not like and I get what I do not like. Another thing: Begin to eat as soon as you are helped. Do not wait for anybody; if you do, your food may become cold.

The seat of honor for the men is always on the hostess' right hand; for the ladies, on the right hand of the host. The lady in the seat of honor is always helped first. She begins to

eat at once. There is nobody to wait for then. The rule is that one should begin to eat as soon as one is served. This rule may be followed everywhere, and the practice of it prevents much embarrassment.

After the roast there will probably be an entremets of some kind. It may be an omelette, it may be only a salad, or it may be some elaborately made dish. In any case, your fork and a bit of bread will help you out. When in doubt, a young man should always use his fork—never his knife, as it is used only to cut with, and to help one's self to cheese. Vegetables are always taken with the fork; lettuce too, and asparagus, except when there is no liquid sauce covering it entirely. Lettuce, when without sauce, asparagus when not entirely covered with sauce, are eaten with the fingers. Water-cress is always eaten with the fingers, and so are artichokes. A dinner ought not to last over two hours; but it may. If our guest yawns or looks at his watch he is ruined socially. He might almost as well thrust his knife into his mouth as do either of them. When he

gets more accustomed to the world, he will discern that people object to a view of his throat suddenly opened to them.

But to return to our dinner-party: If the finger-bowls are brought on, the general custom is to remove them from the little plate on which they stand. The little napkins underneath them are not used: these are merely put there to save the plate from being scratched by the finger-bowls. As usage differs somewhat here, the young guest had better watch his hostess and imitate her.

An ice called a Roman punch is served after the roast; it is always eaten with a spoon. If a fork is served with the ice-cream at the end of the dinner, the amiable young man had better not begin to giggle and ask "What's this for?" If he never saw ice-cream eaten with a fork before, it is not necessary to show it. It is very often so eaten, and if he finds a fork near his ice-cream plate, let him use it just as if it was no novelty. To show surprise in society is bad taste; it is good taste to praise the flowers, the china, the soup. One ought to say that he enjoyed

himself, but never to say that he is thankful for a good dinner. It is understood that civilized people dine together for the pleasure of one another's society, not merely to eat.

When the little cups of black coffee are served, our young guest may take a lump of sugar with his fingers, if there are no tongs. Similarly in regard to olives, he may take them with his fingers and eat them with his fingers. One's fingers should be dipped in the finger-bowls,—there is a story told of a young man who at his first dinner-party put his napkin into his finger-bowl and mopped his face. The host, who ought to have been more polite, asked him if he wanted a bath-tub. The boy said no, and asked for a sponge.

If our young guest be wise he will pay all possible attention to the hostess; the host really does not count until the cigars come around. Then let the young person beware in being too ready to smoke. He may possibly not be offered cigars at all, but if he is, and he smokes in any lady's presence without asking her permission, the seal of vulgarity is impressed on him.

A guest to whom black coffee is served in a little cup ought not to ask for cream. It might cause some inconvenience; it is not the custom. When a plate is changed or sent up to our host, the knife and fork should be laid parallel with each other and obliquely across the plate. At small dinners, where the host insists on helping you twice, one may keep his knife and fork until his plate is returned to him.

III. What Makes a Gentleman.

CARDINAL NEWMAN made a famous definition and description, both in the same paragraph, of a gentleman. "It is almost," he said, in his "Idea of a University," "a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain." And this truth will be found to be the basis of all really good manners. Good manners come from the heart, while etiquette is only an invention of wise heads to prevent social friction, or to keep fools at a distance. Nobody but an idiot will slap a man on the back unless the man invites the slap by his own familiarity. It seems to me that the primary rule which, according to Cardinal Newman, makes a gentleman is more disregarded in large schools than anywhere else. There is no sign which indicates ignorance or lack of culture so plainly as the tendency to censure, to jibe, to sneer,—to be always on the alert to find faults and defects. On the other

hand, a true gentleman does not censure, if he can help it: he prefers to discover virtues rather than faults; and, if he sees a defect, he is silent about it until he can gently suggest a remedy.

The school-boy is not remarkable for such reticence. And this may be one of the reasons why he has the reputation of being selfish, ungrateful, and sometimes cruel. He is not any of these things; he is, as a rule, only thoughtless. It has been said that a *blunder* is often worse than a *crime;* and thoughtlessness sometimes produces effects that are more enduringly disastrous than crimes. Forgetfulness among boys or young men is thoughtlessness. If an engineer forget for a *moment*, his train may go to RUIN. If a telegrapher forget to send a message, death may be the result; but neither of them can acquire such control over himself that he will always *remember*, if he does not practise the art of thinking every day of his life. It is thoughtfulness, consideration, that makes life not only endurable, but pleasant. As Christians, we are bound to do to others as

we would have them do to us. But as members of a great society, in which each person must be a factor even more important than he imagines, we shall find that, even if our Christianity did not move us to bear and forbear from the highest motives, ordinary prudence and regard for our own comfort and reputation should lead us to do these things. The Christian gentleman is the highest type: he may be a hero as well as a gentleman. Culture produces another type, and Cardinal Newman thus describes him. The Cardinal begins by saying that "it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description," he continues, "is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. The gentleman is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. The benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature: like an

easy-chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold or fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast,—all clashing of opinion or collision of feeling, all restraint or suspicion or gloom or resentment,—his great concern being to make every one at their ease or at home. He has his eyes on all the company: he is tender towards the bashful, gentle toward the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unreasonable allusions or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors which he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort; he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets every-

thing for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend."

The Cardinal's definition of a gentleman does not end with these words: you can find it for yourself in his "Idea of a University," page 204. It will be found, on examination, to contain the principles which give a man power to make his own life and that of his fellow-beings cheerful and pleasant. And life is short enough and hard enough to need all the kindness, all the cheerfulness, all the gentleness, that we can put into it.

If a friend passes from among us, one of the most enduring of our consolations is that we never gave him needless pain while he lived. And who can say which of our friends may go next? He who sits by you to-night,

he who greets you first in the morning, may suffer from a hasty word or a thoughtless act that you can never recall.

It is in the ordinary ways of life that the true gentleman shows himself. He does not wait until he gets out of school to pay attention to the little things. He begins here, and he begins the moment he feels that he ought to begin. Somebody once wrote that the man who has never made a mistake is a fool. And another man added to this, that a wise man makes mistakes, but *never* the *same* mistake *twice*. A gentleman at heart may blush when he thinks of his mistakes, but he never repeats them. It is a mistake made by thoughtless young people to stand near others who are talking. It is a grave sin against politeness for them to listen, as they sometimes do, with eyes and ears open for fear they should miss any of the words not intended for them. The young man thus engaged is an object of pity and contempt. Politeness may prevent others from rebuking him publicly, but it does not change their opinion of him, nor does it enter their

minds to excuse him on the plea that he "didn't think."

It does not seem to strike some of you that the convenience of those who work for you ought to be considered, and that unnecessary splashings of liquids and dropping of crumbs and morsels of food is the most reprehensible indication of thoughtlessness.

We often forget that criticism does not mean fault-finding. It means rather the art of finding virtues; and after any private entertainment, at which each performer has done his best for his audience, it is very bad taste to point out all the defects in his work: you may do this at rehearsal, but not after the work is done; you may discourage him by touching on something that he cannot help. A friend of mine once played a part in *Box and Cox*, but on the day after the performance he was much cast down by the comments in one of the daily papers. "Mr. Smith," the critic said, "was admirable, but he should not have made himself ridiculous by wearing such an abnormally *long false* nose." As the nose happened to be Mr.

Smith's *own*, he was discouraged. Criticism of music especially, unless it be intelligent, is likely to make the critic seem ignorant. For instance, there was on one occasion on a musical programme a *ballade* by Chopin in A flat major. The young woman who played it on the piano was afterwards horrified to find herself described as having sung a *lively* ballad called "A Fat Major"! The musical critic had better know what he is talking about or be silent. No, no, gentlemen, let us not be censorious about the efforts of those who do their best for us; and good-fellowship—what the French call *esprit de corps*—ought to show itself in our manners. Anybody can blame injudiciously, but few can praise judiciously. At college boys especially must remember that the college is part of ourselves, and that any reproach on our *alma mater* is a reproach on *ourselves*. Its reputation is our reputation, and the critically censorious student will find that, in the end, it is the wiser course to dwell on the best side of his college life. The world hates a fault-finder: he will soon see himself

left entirely alone with those acute perceptions that help him to find out all that is bad in his fellow-creatures and nothing that is good. To be a gentleman, one must be tolerant, and, above all, grateful.

In the world outside there are many kinds of entertainment. We disposed of the dinner-party in a preceding page. One's conduct anywhere must be guided by good sense and the usages of the occasion. At a concert, for instance, the main object of each person present is to hear the music. Anything that interferes with this is a breach of good manners. To chatter during a song or while a piece of music is played shows selfish disregard for the comfort of others and a contemptible indifference to the feelings of the performer. Music may be a great aid to conversation, but conversation is no assistance to music; and people who go to a concert do not pay for their tickets to hear somebody in the next seat tell his private affairs in a loud voice. There are some human creatures who seem to imagine that they may reveal everything possible to their

next neighbor in a crowded theatre without being heard by anybody else. There is an old anecdote, but a true one, of a very fashionable lady in Boston who attended an organ recital in the Music Hall there. She was supposed to be an amateur of classical music, but her reputation was shattered by an unlucky pause in the tones of the organ. The music ceased unexpectedly, and the only sound heard was that of her voice, soaring above the silence and saying to her friend, "We FRY ours in LARD." Her reputation was ruined in musical circles. One goes to a concert or an opera to listen, not to talk. It is only the vulgar, the ostentatious, the ignorant, that distinguish themselves in public places by a disregard of the rights of others. To enter a concert-room late and to interrupt a singer, to enter any public hall while a speaker is making an address, is to excite the disapproval of all well-bred people. Sir Charles Thornton, for a long time British minister at Washington, was noted for his care in this particular: he would stand for half an hour outside the

door of a concert-room rather than enter while a piece of music was in progress.

Weddings, I presume, may be put down under the head of entertainments. The etiquette of the assistants is very simple. A wedding invitation requires no answer: a card sent by mail and addressed to the senders of the invitation, who are generally the father and mother of the bride, is quite sufficient. It is unnecessary to say that it is not proper during a marriage ceremony to stand on the seats of the pews in order to get a good look at the happy pair. A tradition exists to the effect that a man during a wedding ceremony once climbed on a confessional. It is added, too,—and I am glad of it,—that he fell and broke his neck. But there is no knowing what some barbarians will do: watch them on Sundays, chewing toothpicks, standing in ranks outside of the churches, and believing that the ladies are admiring their best clothes.

My list of entertainments would be incomplete without the dancing party. St. Francis de Sales says of dancing, that a little of

it ought to go a great way. Society ordains that every man shall learn to dance; but if he can talk intelligently, society will forgive him for not dancing. Dancing, after all, is only a substitute for conversation; and, properly directed, it is a very good substitute for scandal, mean gossip, or the frivolous chatter which makes assemblies of young people unendurable to anybody who has not begun to be afflicted with softening of the brain.

Public dances—dances into which anybody can find entrance by paying a fee—are avoided by decent people. A young man who has any regard for his reputation will avoid them; and as nearly every young man has his way to make in the world, he cannot too soon realize how the report that he frequents such places will hurt him; for, as I said, there are no secrets in this world,—everything comes out sooner or later.

It is no longer the fashion for a young man to invite a young woman to accompany him to a dance, even at a private house. He must first ask her mother. This European

fashion has—thank Heaven!—reached many remote districts of late, where young people hitherto ignored the existence of their parents when social pleasures were concerned. The young girl who doesn't want the "old man to know" had better be avoided. And in the best circles young women are not permitted to go to the theatre or to dances without a *chaperon*,—that is, the mother or some elderly lady is expected to accompany the young people. This, of course, makes trips to the theatre expensive; but the young man who cannot afford to take an extra aunt or mother had better avoid such amusements until he can.

As to whether you are to take part in the round dances or not, that will be settled by your confessor: I have no right to dictate on that subject. But if you are invited to a dance, pay your respects to your hostess *first*, and say something pleasant. You must remember that she intends that you shall be useful,—that you shall dance with the ladies to whom she introduces you, and that you shall not think of your own pleasure entirely,

but help to give others pleasure by dancing with the ladies who have no partners. In a word, you must be as unselfish in this frivolous atmosphere as on more serious occasions. When the refreshments are served, you must think of yourself last. If you want to gorge yourself, you can take a yard or two of Bologna sausage to your room after the entertainment is over. A young man over twenty-one should wear an evening suit and no jewelry at a dance. Infants under that age are supposed to be safely tucked in bed at the time the ordinary dance begins.

At a dance or at any other entertainment no introduction should be made thoughtlessly. If a gentleman is presented to a lady, it should be done only after her permission has been asked and received. And the form should be, "Mrs. Jones, allow me to present Mr. Smith." A younger man should always be introduced to an older man, one of inferior position to one of superior position. If you are introducing a friend to the mayor of your city, you ought not to say, "Let me introduce the Mayor to you."

On the contrary, the form should be "Mr. Mayor, allow me to present my friend Mr. Smith."

On being introduced to a lady, it is not the fashion for a man to extend his hand,—for hand-shaking on first introduction is a thing of the past. If the lady extends her hand, it is proper to take it; but the pump-handle style is no longer practised, except perhaps in some unknown wilds of Alaska. After a man is introduced to a lady and he meets her again, he must not bow until she has bowed to him. In France the man bows first; in America and England we give that privilege to the woman. An American takes his hat entirely from his head when he meets a lady; a foreigner raises it but slightly, but he bows lower than we do. In introducing people, we ought always to be careful to give them their titles, and to add, if possible, the place from which they come. If Mr. Jones, of Chicago, is introduced to Mr. Robinson, of New York, the subject for conversation is already arranged. We know what they will talk about. If the wife of the

President introduced you to him, she would call him the President; but if you addressed him, you would call him "Mr. President," as you would address the mayor of a city as "Mr. Mayor." Mrs. Grant was the only President's wife who did not give her husband his title in introductions: she called him simply and modestly, "Mr. Grant."

An English bard sings:

"I know a duke; well—let him pass—
I may not call his grace an ass,
Though if I did, I'd do no wrong—
Save to the asses and my song.

"The duke is neither wise nor good:
He gambles, drinks, scorns womanhood;
And at the age of twenty-four
Is worn and battered as threescore.

"I know a waiter in Pall Mall,
Who works and waits and reasons well;
Is gentle, courteous, and refined,
And has a magnet in his mind.

"What is it makes his graceless grace
So like a jockey out of place?
What makes the waiter—tell who can—
The very flower of gentleman?

"Perhaps their mothers!—God is great!
It can't be accident or fate.
The waiter's heart is true,—and then,
Good manners make our gentlemen."

IV. What Does Not Make a Gentleman.

WE have touched on the etiquette of dress and of entertainments; and now I beg leave to repeat some things already said, and to add a few others that need to be said.

A young man cannot afford to be slovenly in his dress. Carelessness in dress will prejudice people against him as completely as a badly written letter. He will find himself mysteriously left out in invitations. If he applies for a position in an office or a bank, or anywhere else, where neatness of dress is expected, he will get the cold shoulder. A young man who wears grease spots habitually on the front of his coat, whose trousers are decorated with dark shadows and the mud of last week, whose shoes are red and rusty, and who hangs a soiled handkerchief, like a flag of truce, more than half out of his pocket, will find himself barred from every place which his ambition would spur him to enter. You may say that dress does not

make the man. You may call to mind Burns' lines to the effect that "a man's a man for a' that;" a piece of silver is only a piece of silver, worth more or less, until the United States mint stamps it a dollar. The stamp of your character and the manner of your bringing up give you the value at which the world appraises you.

I recall to mind an instance which shows that we cannot always control our dress. There was a boy at school who was the shortest and the youngest among three tall brothers. He never had any clothes of his own. He had to wear the cast-off suits of the other brothers, and it was no unusual thing for his trousers to trip him up when he tried to run, although they were fastened well up under his shoulders. This unhappy youth was the victim of circumstances; if he made a bad impression, he could not help it. But he was always neat and clean, and he never put grease on his hair or leaned against papered walls in order to leave his mark there. He never saturated himself with cologne to avoid a bath; he never chewed

gum; he was never seen with a dirty-yellow rivulet at either side of his lips, which flowed from a plug of tobacco somewhere in his gullet; and so, though he was pitied for the eccentricities of his toilet, he was not despised.

In a country where we do not have to buy water there is no excuse for neglecting the bath. The average Englishman talks so much of his bath and his tub, that one cannot help thinking that the Order of Bath is a late discovery in his country, although we know it was instituted long ago. Every boy ought to keep himself "well groomed;" to be clean outside and in gives him a solid respect for himself that makes others respect him. It is like a college education: it causes him to feel that he is any man's equal. But one with a sham diamond in his bosom, or cuffs that he has to shove up his sleeves every now and then to prevent them from showing how dirty they are, can never feel quite like a man.

We Americans have reason to be proud of the decay of two arts which Charles

Dickens when he wrote "American Notes" found in a flourishing condition,—the art of swearing in public and the art of tobacco-chewing. When Dickens made his first visit to this country he was amazed by the skill which Americans showed in the art of tobacco-chewing. The "spit-box," the spittoon, the cuspidore,—which is supposed to be an elegant name for a very inelegant utensil,—seemed to him to be the most important of American institutions. We who have become accustomed to the cuspidore do not realize how its constant presence surprises foreigners. They do not understand why the floor of every hotel should be furnished with conveniences for spitting, because no country except the United States is infested by tobacco-chewers. Charles Dickens was severe on the prevalence of the tobacco-chewing habit. He was roundly abused for his criticisms on our public manners. No doubt his censure was well founded, for the manners of Americans have improved since. To Dickens it seemed as if the principal American amusement

was tobacco-chewing. He found the American a gloomy being, who regarded all the refinements with dislike, and whose politeness to women was his one redeeming feature. Dickens admitted that a woman might travel alone from one end of the country to the other and receive the most courteous attention from even the roughest miner. And this is as true now as it was then. There are no men in any country so polite to women as Americans; and in no other country on the face of the earth is the sex of our mothers so publicly respected. This chivalric characteristic, which Tom Moore tells us was the most brilliant jewel in the crown of the Irish, "When Malachi wore the collar of gold," is now an American characteristic, and distinctively an American characteristic. So sure are the ladies of every attention, that they take the reverential attitude of men as a matter of course. They no longer thank us when we give up our places in the street-car to them, or walk in the mud to let them pass; and it is probably regard for them that has caused the Ameri-

can to cease to flood every public place with vile tobacco-juice.

There was a time when the marble floors of our largest hotels were so spotted with this vicious fluid that their color could not be recognized, when the atmosphere reeked with filthy fumes, and many a man bit off a large chunk of tobacco between every second word. It was his method of punctuating his talk. He expectorated when he wanted to make a comma and bit off a "chew" at a period; he squirted a half-pint of amber liquid across the room for an interrogation-mark, and struck his favorite spot on the ceiling to mark an exclamation. But we are not so bad as we used to be. George Washington, whose first literary effort was an essay on Manners, might complain that we lack much, but he would find that the tobacco-chewer is not so prominent a figure in all landscapes as he formerly was.

The truth is, that American good sense is putting an end to this dirty and disgusting habit. There was a time when a man was asked for a "chew" on almost every street

corner. But this was in the days of the Bowery boys and of the old volunteer fire-departments, when strange things occurred. It is related that an English traveller riding down Broadway, some time about the year 1852, found that the light was suddenly shut out of his left eye. He fancied for an instant that his optic nerves had been paralyzed. He was relieved by the sound of an apologetic voice coming from the opposite seat. It said: "I didn't intend to put that 'chew' into your eye, sir. I was aiming at the window when you bobbed your head!" And the thoughtful expectorator gently removed the ball of tobacco from the Englishman's eye!

That could hardly occur now. Chewers do not take such risks, or they aim straighter. For a long time the typical American, as represented in English novels or on the English stage, chewed tobacco and whittled a wooden nutmeg. The English have learned only of late that every American does not do these things.

If foreigners hate this savage practice, who can blame them? How we should sneer and

jeer at the English if, in ferry-boats, in horse-cars, in public halls, pools of tobacco-juice should be seen, and if perpetual yellow, ill-smelling fountains sprung from men's mouths. How *Puck* would caricature John Bull in his constant attitude of chewing! How filthy and barbaric we would say the British were! We should speak of it, in Fourth-of-July orations, as a proof of British inferiority. But we cannot do this, for the English do not chew tobacco,—and some of us do.

It is a habit that had better be unlearned as soon as possible. It is happily ceasing to be an American vice, and with it will cease the chronic dyspepsia and many of the stomach and throat diseases which have become almost national. Many a man, come to the years of discretion, bitterly regrets that he ever learned to chew tobacco; but he thought once that it was a manly thing, and he learns when too late that the manly thing would have been to avoid it. Some of you will perhaps remember a fashion boys had—I don't know whether they have it now—of getting tattooed by some expert who prac-

tised the art. What pain we suffered while a small star was picked in blue ink at the junction of the thumb with the hand !—and how proud we were of a blue anchor printed indelibly on our wrists! But a day came when we should have been glad to have blotted out this insignia with thrice the pain. And so the day will come when the inveterate tobacco-chewer will wish with all his heart that he had never been induced to put a piece of tobacco into his mouth. It is one of those vices which has an unpleasant sting and which is its own punishment. It is unbecoming to a gentleman ; it violates every rule of good manners,—the spectacle of a young man dropping a "quid" into his hand before he goes into dinner and trying on the sly to wipe off the dirty stains on his chin is enough to turn the stomach of a cannibal.

Going back to the subject of entertainments, let me impress on you that it is your duty when you go into society to think as little of yourselves as possible, and to talk as little of yourselves. If a man can sing or play

on any musical instrument or recite, and he is asked to do any of these things, let him not refuse. Young women sometimes say no in society when they mean yes ; but young men are not justified in practising such an affectation. It is not good taste to show that one is anxious to sing or to play or to recite. If you are invited out, do not begin at once by talking about elocution, until somebody is forced to ask you to recite ; and do not hum snatches of song until there is no escape for your friends from the painful duty of asking you to sing. The restless efforts of some amateurs to get a hearing in society always brings to mind a certain theatrical episode. There was a young actress who thought she could sing, and consequently she introduced a vocal solo whenever she could. She was cast for the principal part in a melodrama full of tragic situations. The manager congratulated himself that here, at least, there was no chance for the tuneful young lady to try her scales. But he was mistaken. The great scene was on. A flash of lightning illumined the stage. The actress was holding a pa-

thetic conversation with her mother as the thunder rolled. The mother suddenly fell with a shriek, struck dead. And then the devoted daughter said, "Aha, mee mother is dead! Alas, I will now sing the song she loved so much in life!" And the young lady walked to the footlights and warbled "Comrades."

She *would* and she did sing, but I am afraid the audience laughed. I offer this authentic anecdote as a warning to young singers that they should neither be hasty nor reluctant in displaying their talents. A man goes into society that he may give as well as gain pleasure. The highest form of social pleasure is conversation; but conversation does not mean a monologue. Good listeners are as highly appreciated in society as good talkers. A good listener often gives an impression of great wisdom which is dispelled the moment he opens his mouth. Mr. Gladstone was charmed by a young lady who sat next to him at dinner; he concluded that she was one of the most intelligent women he had ever met, until she spoiled it all by

saying, with effusion, "Oh, I love cabbage!"

A young man should neither talk too much nor too little, and he should never talk about himself unless he is forced to. Madame Roland, a famous Frenchwoman, who perished during the Reign of Terror under the guillotine, said that by listening attentively to others she made more friends than by any remarks of her own. "Judicious silence," the author of "In a Club Corner" says, "is one of the great social virtues." A man who tries to be funny at all times is a social nuisance. Two famous men suffered very much for their tendency to be always humorous. These were Sydney Smith and our own lamented S. S. Cox. Sydney Smith could not speak without exciting laughter. Once, when he had said grace, a young lady next to him exclaimed, "You are always so amusing!" And S. S. Cox, one of the most serious of men at heart and the cleverest in head, never attained the place in politics he ought to have gained because he was supposed to be always in fun. Jokes are charming things

in a limited circle, but no gentleman nowadays indulges in those practical jokes which we have heard of. It is not considered a delicate compliment to pull a chair away just as anybody is about to sit down; and the young person who jabs acquaintances in the ribs, to make them laugh at his delightful sayings, is not rapturously welcomed in quiet families.

A young man should not make a practice of using slang, and he should never use it in the presence of ladies. To advise a friend to "shut his face" or to "come off the perch" may sound "smart," but it is vulgar, and is fatal to those ambitious young men who feel that their success in life depends on the good opinion of cultivated people. Moreover, this habitual slang is likely to crop out at the most inopportune times. Mr. Sankey, of the evangelizing firm of Moody and Sankey, at a camp-meeting once asked a devout young man if he loved the Lord. There was profound silence until the young man, who thought in slang, answered in a loud voice, "You bet!"

Slang is in bad taste; and the slang we borrow from the English is the worst of all —the repetition of "don't you know?" for instance. "I'm going to town, don't you know, and if I see your friends, don't you know, I'll tell them you were asking for them, don't you know,—oh, yes, I shall, don't you know." Imagine an American so idiotic as not only to imitate the vulgarest Cockney slang, but to do it in the vulgar est Cockney accent! There was a woman who at a dinner said, "Have some soup, don't you know; it's not half nawsty, don't you know."

I must remind you again not to use, in letter-writing, tinted or ornamented paper. Let it be white and, by all means, unruled; your envelope may be either oblong or square, but the square form is preferable. If you have time and want to follow the present fashion, and also to pay a compliment of extreme carefulness to the person to whom you are writing, close your letters with red sealing-wax. Some old-fashioned people look on postal cards as vulgar. However, it

is not well to write family secrets on these cheap forms. And if any man owes you money, do not ask him for it on a postal card : it is against a more forcible law than those that make etiquette. Postal cards are not to be used except on business. Be sure to write the name of the person to whom the letter is addressed on the last page of the letter. But if you begin a letter with "Dear Mr. Smith," you need not write Mr. Smith's name again at the end of the letter. Buy good paper and envelopes. And do not write on old scraps of paper when you write home. Nothing is too good for your father and mother ; they may not say much about it, but every little attention from you brightens their lives and helps towards paying that debt of gratitude to them which you can never fully discharge.

A young man has asked me to say something about the etiquette of cards and calls. A man, under the American code of politeness, need not make many calls. If he is invited to an entertainment of any kind, he should go to the house of his host to call or

leave his card. If it be his first call, he must leave a card for each grown-up member of the family. After that he need leave only one card. The old fashion of turning down the corners of cards is gone out. A man's card should be very small, *not* gilt-edged; it should never be printed, but always engraved or written, with the address in the left-hand lower corner. A man may write his own cards. In that case he must not put "Mr." before his name. But if he has them engraved, the present usage demands that "Mr." must appear before his name. If he has been at a party of any kind, he must call within a week after it, or he can send his card with his mother or sister, if they should happen to be calling at his host's within that time. A man's card, like his note-paper, ought to be as simple as possible. Secretary Bayard's cards always bore the plain inscription, "Mr. Bayard." Sciolists and pretenders of all kinds put a great number of titles on their cards. Corn-cutters and spiritists and quacks of all sorts are always sure to print "Pro-

fessor" before their names, but men who have a right to the title never do it. Be sure, then, to have a neat, plain card, well engraved. It costs very little to have a plate made by a good stationery firm; and a neat, elegant card, like a well-written letter, is a good introduction. It symbolizes the man. Daniel Webster's card was simply "Mr. Webster," and it expressed the man's hatred for all pretence. A gentleman should never call on a young lady without asking for her mother or her *chaperon.* And he should never leave a card for her without leaving one for her mother. It will not do to send a card by mail after one has been asked to dinner. A personal visit must be made and a card left. In calling on the sons or daughters of a family, cards should be left for the father and mother.

It may surprise some young men to find that in the great world fathers and mothers are so much considered. I know that there are some boys at school who write home on any odd, soiled paper they can find, and who write only when they want something or feel

like grumbling. Their letters run something like this:

"DEAR FATHER: The weather is bad. I am not well this evening, hoping to find you the same Grub as usual. Please send me five dollars.

"Yours," etc.

And, of course, their fathers and mothers go down on their knees at once and thank Heaven for such dutiful and clever boys—that is, if you boys have brought them up properly. But so many of our parents have been so badly brought up. They really do not see how superior their children are to them. They actually fancy that they know more of the world than a boy of sixteen or seventeen; and they occasionally insist on being obeyed. It would be a pleasant thing to form a new society among you—a society for the proper bringing up of fathers and mothers. At present there are some parents who really refuse to be the slaves of their children, or to take their advice. This is unreasonable, I know, but it is true. Think how frightful it is for a young man of spirit to be kept at college during the best years

of his life, when he might be learning new clog-dance steps on street-corners or reading detective stories all day long!

It would be hard to change things now; and the fact remains that in good society fathers and mothers are considered before their children. The man who lacks reverence for his parents, who shows irritation to them, who pains them by his grumbling and fault-finding, is no gentleman. He is what the English call a cad. He is the most contemptible of God's creatures. Let me sum up in the famous lines which you all ought to know by heart; they are the words that Shakspere puts into the mouth of Polonius when his son Laertes is about to depart into the great world:

"Give thy thoughts no *tongue*,
Nor any unproportioned *thought* his ACT.
Be thou familiar, but by no means *vulgar:*
The friends thou hast, and their adoption TRIED,
GRAPPLE them to THY SOUL with hooks of STEEL;
But do not dull thy *palm* with *entertainment*
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of *entrance* to a quarrel, but, being in,
Bear it that the opposer may BEWARE of *thee.*

Give *every* man thine EAR, but *few* thy VOICE;
Take *each* man's censure, but reserve *thy* judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in *fancy;* rich, not *gaudy;*
For the *apparel* oft proclaims the MAN.

. . . . . .

Neither a borrower nor a LENDER be;
For loan oft loses both *itself* and *friend,*
And borrowing *dulls* the edge of husbandry.
This, above all: to thine *own* self be TRUE;
And it must *follow,* as the night the *day,*
Thou canst not *then* be FALSE to ANY MAN"

V. How to Express One's Thoughts.

MR. FREDERICK HARRISON, a man of letters, whose literary judgments are as right as his philosophical judgments are wrong, tells us that the making of many books and the reading of periodical sheets obscure the perception and benumb the mind. "The incessant accumulation of fresh books must hinder any real knowledge of the old; for the multiplicity of volumes becomes a bar upon our use of any. In literature especially does it hold that we cannot see the wood for the trees." I am not about to advise you to add to the number of useless leaves which hide the forms of noble trees; but, if your resolve to write outlives the work of preparation, you may be able to give the world a new classic, or, at least, something that will cheer and elevate. This preparation is rigid. Two important qualities of it must be keen observation and

careful reading. It is a pity that an old dialogue on "Eyes or No Eyes" is no longer included in the reading-books for children. The modern book-makers have improved it out of existence; nevertheless, it taught a good lesson. It describes the experience of two boys on a country road. Common things are about them,—wild flowers, weeds, a ditch,—but one discovers many hidden things by the power of observation, while the other sees nothing but the outside of the common things. To write well one must have eyes and see. To be observant it is not necessary that one should be critical in the sense of fault-finding. Keen observation and charitable toleration ought to go together. We may see the peculiarities of those around us and be amused by them; but we shall never be able to write anything about character worth writing unless we go deeper and pierce through the crust which hides from us the hidden meanings of life. How tired would we become of Dickens if he had confined himself to pictures of surface characteristics! If we weary of him, it

is because Mr. Samuel Weller is so constantly dropping his *w*'s, and Sairey Gamp so constantly talking of Mrs. Harris. If we find interest and refreshment in him now, it is because he went deeper than the thousand and one little habits with which he distinguishes his personages.

To write, then, we must acquire the art of observing in a broad and intelligent spirit. Nature will hang the East and West with gorgeous tapestry in vain if we do not see it. And many times we shall judge rashly and harshly if we do not learn to detect the true-heartedness that hides behind the face which seems cold to the unobservant. We are indeed blind when we fail to know that an angel has passed until another has told us of his passing.

Apparently there is not much to think of the wrinkled hand of the old woman who crosses your path in the street. You catch a glimpse of it as she carries her bundle in that hand on her way from work in the twilight. Perhaps you pass on and think of it no more. Perhaps you note the knotted,

purple veins standing out from the toil-reddened surface, and then your eyes catch at a glance the wrinkled face on which are written the traces of trials, self-sacrifice, and patience. It is hard to believe that those hands were once soft and dimpled childish hands, and that face bright with happy smiles. The story of her life is the story of many lives from day to day. Those coarse, ungloved, wrinkled hands will seem vulgar to you only if you have never learned to observe and think. They may suggest a noble story or poem to you, if you take their meaning rightly. Life, every-day life, is full of the suggestions of great things for those who have learned to look and to observe.

Mr. Harrison, from whom I have quoted already, puts his finger on a fault which must inevitably destroy all power of good literary production. It is a common fault, and the antidote for it is the cultivation of the art of careful reading. "A habit of reading idly," Mr. Harrison says, "debilitates and corrupts the mind for all wholesome reading; the habit of reading wisely is one

of the most difficult to acquire, needing strong resolution and infinite pains; and reading for mere reading's sake, instead of for the sake of the good we gain from reading, is one of the worst and commonest and most unwholesome habits we have."

In order to write well, one must read well —one must read a few good books—and never idle over newspapers. Newspapers have become necessities, and grow larger each year. But the larger they are the more deleterious they are. The modern newspaper lies one day and corrects its lies, adding, however, a batch of new ones, on the day after. There are a few newspapers which have literary value, though even they, mirroring the passing day, have some of its faults. As a rule, avoid newspapers. They will help you to fritter away precious time; they will spoil your style in the same way that a slovenly talker, with whom you associate constantly, will spoil your talk; for newspapers are generally written in a hurry, and hurried literary work, unless by a masterhand, is never good work. Nevertheless, in

our country, the newspapers absorb a great quantity of literary matter which would, were there no newspapers, never see the light.

Literature considered as a profession includes what is known as journalism,—not perhaps reportorial work, but the writing of leaders, book reviews, theatrical notices, and other articles which require a light touch, tact, and careful practice, but which do not always have those qualities. A writer lately said: "Literature has become a trade, and finance a profession." This is hardly true; but some authors have come to look on their profession as a trade, and to value it principally for the money it brings. Anthony Trollope, for instance, whose novels are still popular, set himself to his work as to a task; he wrote so many words for so much money daily. This may account for the woodenness of his literary productions. In the pursuit of art, money should not be the first consideration, although it should not be left entirely out of consideration; for the artist should live by his art, the musician by his music, and the

author by his books. Literature, then, should be a vocation as well as an avocation.

Literature, in spite of the many stories about the poverty of writers, has, in our English-speaking countries, been on the whole a fairly well-paid profession. Chaucer was by no means a pauper; Shakspere retired at a comparatively early age to houses and lands earned by his pen in the pleasant town of Stratford. Pope earned nearly fifty thousand dollars by his translations or, rather, paraphrases of Homer. Goldsmith, though always poor through his own generosity and extravagance, earned what in our days would be held to be a handsome competence. Sir Walter Scott made enormous sums which he spent royally on his magnificent castle of Abbotsford. Charles Dickens earned enough to make him rich, and our modern writers, though less in genius, are not less in their power of securing the hire of which they are more than worthy. Mr. Howells has had at least ten thousand dollars a year for permitting his serial stories to be printed in the publications of Harper & Brothers. Mr. Will

Carleton, the author of "Farm Ballads," has no doubt an equal amount from his copyrights. Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, the author of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," easily commands eight thousand dollars for the copyright of a novel. So you see that the picture often presented to us of the haggard author shivering over his tallow candle in a garret is somewhat exaggerated.

But none of these authors attained success without long care given to art. They all had their early struggles. Mrs. Burnett, for instance, was a very brave and hard-working young girl; she was poor; her only hope in life was her education; she used it to advantage and by constant practice in literary work. The means of her success was the capacity for taking pains. It is the means of all success in life. And any man or woman who expects to adopt literature as a profession must *see well, read well, and take infinite pains.* Probably Mr. Howells and Mrs. Burnett had many MSS. rejected by the editors. Probably, like many young authors, each day brought back an article

which had cost them many weary hours,—for literary work is the most nerve-wearying and brain-wearying of all work—with the legend, "Returned with thanks." Still they kept on taking infinite pains.

Lord Byron awoke one morning and found himself famous. But that first morning of fame had cost much study, much thought, and, no doubt, periods of despondency in which he almost resolved not to write at all. Poetry does not gush from the poet, like fire out of a Roman candle when you light it. Of all species of literary composition, poetry requires more exquisite care than any other. A sonnet which has not been written and rewritten twenty times may be esteemed as worthless. To-day no modern poem has a right to be printed unless it be technically perfect. It seems a sacrilege to speak of poetry as a profession; it ought to be a vocation only, and the poet ought not only to be made by infinite pains taken with himself, but born. As to the rewards of extreme fineness in the expression of poetry, I have heard that Longfellow received one

thousand dollars for his comparatively short poem of "Keramos," and that Tennyson had a guinea a line. But we shall leave out poetry in talking of filthy lucre, and consider literature as represented by journalism, in which there is very little poetry.

I did not intend to touch on journalism, as the work of making newspapers is sometimes called, but I have been lately asked to give my opinion as to whether journalism is a good preparation for the pursuit of literature. Perhaps the best way to do this would be to give the experiences of a young journalist first.

I imagine a young person who had written at least twenty compositions; some on "Gratitude," one on "Ambition," one on "The History of a Pin," and a grand poem on the Southern Confederacy in five cantos. He had been prepared for the pursuit of literature by being made to write a composition every Friday. These compositions were read aloud in his class. What beautiful sentiments were uttered on those Fridays! How everybody thrilled when young Strephon

compared Ireland to "that prairie-grass which smells sweeter the more it is trodden on"! He had never seen such grass; he would not have recognized it if he had seen it; but he had read about it, and when a cruel scientific instructor asked him to give the botanical name, he turned away in disgust. His finest feelings were outraged. This, however, did not prevent the simile of the prairie-grass of unknown genus from cantering through all the compositions of the other members of the class for many succeeding weeks, until the professor got into a habit of asking, when a boy rose to read his essay: "Is there prairie-grass in it?" If the essayist said yes, he was made to sit down and severely reprimanded. Teachers were very cruel in those days.

There was another lovely simile ruthlessly cut down in its middle age—pardon me if I digress and pour out my wrongs to you; I know you can appreciate them. A boy of genius once said that "Charity, like an eternal flame, cheers, but not inebriates." After that inspired utterance, charity, like

an eternal flame, cheered, but not inebriated, the composition of every other writer, until the same cruel hand put it out. In those days we knew a good thing when we saw it, and, if it saved trouble, we appreciated it.

Somewhat later the young person attained a position in the office of an illustrated paper. It was a newspaper which was so fearful that its foreign letters should be incorrect that it always had them written at home. The young gentleman whose desk was next to that of your obedient servant wrote the Paris, Dublin, and New York letters. The correspondent from Rome and Constantinople, who also did the market reports at home, had some trouble with his spelling occasionally, and made a very old gentleman in the corner indignant by asking him whether "pecuniary" was spelled with a "c" or a "q," and similar questions. This old gentleman wrote the fashion column, and signed himself "Mabel Evangeline." He sometimes made mistakes about the fashions, but they were very naturally blamed on the printers. To your obedient servant fell the agricultural

and the religious columns. All went well, for the prairie-grass was kept out of the agricultural column, though some strange things went in—all went well until he copied out of a paper a receipt for making hens lay. He did not know then that it was a comic paper, and that the friend who wrote it was only in fun. The hens of several subscribers lay down and died. There was trouble in the office, and the agricultural department was taken from him and given to "Mabel Evangeline," who later came to grief by describing an immense peanut-tree which was said to grow in Massachusetts.

Your obedient servant was asked to write leaders on current subjects. How joyfully he went to work! Here was a chance to introduce the prairie-grass and the "eternal flame." With a happy face he took his "copy" to the managing editor. Why did that great man frown as he read: "If we compare Dante with Milton, we find that the great Florentine sage was like that prairie-grass which—" "Do you call this a current subject?" he demanded. "It will not do.

Where's the other one?" Your obedient servant, in fear and trembling, gave him the other slips. He began: "The geocentric movement, like that eternal flame which cheers, but—" He paused. "When I asked," he said, in an awful voice—"when I asked you for current subjects, I wanted an editorial on the fight in the Fourth Ward and a paragraph on the sudden rise in lard. Do you understand?"

Dante and the geocentric movement, the prairie-grass and the eternal flame were crushed. The wise young person learned to adapt himself to the ways of newspaper offices, and all went well again, until he attempted high art. This newspaper was young and not very rich; therefore economy had to be used in the matter of illustrations. The great man, its editor, had a habit of buying second-hand pictures—perhaps it was not to save money, but because he loved the old masters,—and it became the duty of the present writer, who was then a young person, and who is now your obedient servant, to write articles to suit the pictures. For

instance, if a scene in Madrid had been bought, the present writer wrote about Madrid. It was easy, for he had an encyclopædia in the office; but if anybody had borrowed the volume containing "M" we always called Madrid by some other name, for "Mabel Evangeline," who said he had travelled, said foreign cities looked pretty much alike. "Mabel Evangeline," who sometimes, I am afraid, drank too much beer and mixed up things, was not to be relied on, for he put in a picture of Rome, N. Y., for Rome, Italy, and brought the paper into contempt. Still, I think this would not have made so much difference, if he had not labelled a picture of an actress in a very big hat and a very low-cut gown, "Home from a convent school." He was discharged after this, and the present writer asked to perform his functions. Nothing unpleasant would have happened, if a picture had not been sent in one day in a hurry. It was a dim picture. It seemed to represent a tall woman and a ghost. The present writer named it "Lady Macbeth and the Ghost of Banquo," and spun out a

graphic description of the artist's meaning. Next day when the paper came out, the picture was "The Goddess of Liberty crowning Abraham Lincoln."

It was a mistake; but who does not make mistakes? Who ever saw the Goddess of Liberty, anyhow? If you heard the way that editor talked to the promising young journalist, you would have thought he was personally acquainted with both Lady Macbeth and the Goddess of Liberty, and that they had not succeeded in teaching him good manners. It is sad to think that mere trifles will often cause thoughtless people to lose their tempers.

The writing for newspapers is a good introduction to the profession of literature, if the aspirant can study, can read good books when not at work, can still take pains in spite of haste, and cultivate accuracy of practice. The best way to learn to write is to write. One engaged in supplying newspapers with "copy" *must* write. If he can keep a strict eye on his style—if he can avoid slang, "smart" colloquialism, he will find that the

necessity for conciseness and the little time allowed for hunting for the right word for the right place will help him in attaining ease and aptness of expression.

The first difficulty the unpractised writer has to overcome is a lack of the right words. Words are repeated, and other words that are wanted to express some nice distinction of meaning will not come. Constant reference to a good dictionary or a book of synonyms is the surest remedy for this; and if the writer will refuse to use any word that does not express *exactly* what he means, he will make steady advance in the power of expression. Words that burn do not come at first. They are sought and found. Tennyson, old as he was, polished his early poems, hoping to make them perfect before he died. Pope's lines, which seem so easy, so smooth, which seem to say in three or four words what we have been trying to say all our lives in ten or eleven, were turned and re-turned, carved and re-carved, cut and re-cut with all the scrupulousness of a sculptor curving a Grecian nose on his statue:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

That is easy reading. It seems as easy as making an egg stand on end, or as putting an apple into a dumpling—when you know how. It is easy because it was so hard; it is easy because Pope took infinite pains to make it so. Had he put less labor into it, he would have failed to make it live. It is true that a thing is worth just as much as we put into it.

Although the desire to write is often kindled by much reading, the power of writing is often paralyzed by the discovery that the reading has been of the wrong kind. Again, the tyro who has read little and that little unsystematically is tempted to lay down his pen in despair. Lord Bacon said that "reading maketh a full man, writing a ready man;" from which we may conclude that he who reads may best utilize his stock of knowledge by learning to write. But he must first read, no matter how keen his observation may be or how original his thoughts are; for a good style does not come by nature. It must be

the expression of temperament as well as thought; but it must have acquired clearness and elegance, which are due to the construction of sentences in the good company of great authors. To write, you must read, and be careful what you read; and you must read critically. To read a play of Shakspere's only for the story is to degrade Shakspere to the level of the railway novel. It is better to have read the trial scene in "The Merchant of Venice" critically, missing no shade in Portia's character or speech, no expression of Shylock's, than to have read all Shakspere carelessly. To make a specialty of literature, one must be, above all, thorough. The writings that live have a thousand fine points in them unseen of the casual reader, and, like the carvings mentioned in Miss Donnelly's fine poem, "Unseen, yet Seen," known only to God. Take ten lines of any great writer, examine them closely with the aid of all the critical power you have, and then you will see that simplicity in literature is produced by the art which conceals art. That style which is easiest to

read is the hardest to write. Genius has been defined as the capacity for taking infinite pains.

There is a passage in "Ben Hur" which seems to me particularly applicable to our subject. You remember, in the chariot-race, where Ben Hur's cruel experience in the galleys serves him so well. He would not have had the strength of hand or the steadiness of posture, were it not for the work with the oars and the constant necessity of standing on a deck which was even more unsteady than the swaying chariot. "All experience," says the author, "is useful." This is especially true for the writer. One can hardly write a page without feeling how little one knows; and if the great aim of knowledge be to attain that consciousness, the writer sooner attains it than other men.

Everything, from the pink tinge in a seashell to the varying tints of an approaching thunder-cloud, from an old farmer's talk of crops and weather to your lesson in geology and astronomy, will help you. Do not imagine that science and literature are oppo-

nents. For myself, I would not permit anybody who did not know at least the rudiments of botany and geology to begin the serious study of literature. If Coleridge felt the need of attending a series of geological lectures late in life, in order to add to his power of making new metaphors and similes, how much greater is our necessity for adding to our knowledge of the phenomena of nature, that we may use our knowledge to the greater glory of God! Literature is the reflection of life, and literature ought to be the crystallization of all knowledge.

You will doubtless find that what you most need in the beginning is to know more about words and about books. But this vacuum can be filled by earnest thought and serious application, system, and thoroughness. It takes you a long time to play a mazurka of Chopin's well. It takes you a long time even to learn compositions less important. A young woman sits many months before a piano before she learns to drag "Home, Sweet Home!" through the eye of a needle; and then to flatten out again *con expressione;*

and then to chase it up to the last key until it seems to be lost in a still, small protest; and then to bring it to life and send it thundering up and down, as if it were chased by lightning. How easy it all seems, and how delighted we are when our old friend, "Home, Sweet Home!" appears again in its original form! But there was a time when it was not easy—a time when the counting of one and two and three was not easy. So it is with the art of writing. It is not easy in the beginning. It may be easy to make grandiloquent similes about "prairie-grass" and the "eternal light which cheers," etc.; but that is just like beginning to play snatches of a grand march before one knows the scales.

To begin to write well, one must cut off all the useless leaves that obscure the fruit, which is the thought, and keep the sun from it. Figures should be used sparingly. One metaphor that blazes at the climax of an article after many pages of simplicity is worth half a hundred scattered wherever they happen to fall. It is a white diamond as compared to a handful of garnets.

VI. Letter-writing.

THERE is no art so important in the conduct of our modern life, after the art of conversation, as the art of letter-writing. A young man who shows a good education and careful training in his letters puts his foot on the first round of the ladder of success. If, in addition to this, he can acquire early in life the power of expressing himself easily and gracefully, he can get what he wants in eight cases out of ten. Very few people indeed can resist a cleverly written letter.

In the old times, when there was no Civil Service and Congressmen made their appointments to West Point at their own sweet will, an applicant's fate was often decided by his letters. There is a story told of Thaddeus Stevens, a famous statesman of thirty years ago, that he once rejected an applicant for admission to the military school. This applicant met him one day in a corridor of

the Capitol and remonstrated violently. "Your favoritism is marked, Mr. Stevens," he said; "you have blasted my career from mere party prejudice."

The legislator retorted, "I would not give an appointment to any blasted fool who spells 'until' with two 'll's' and 'till' with one." And the disappointed aspirant went home to look into his dictionary.

Such trifles as this make the sum of life. A man's letter is to most educated people an index of the man himself. His card is looked on in the same light in polite society. But a man's letter is more important than his visiting-card, though the character of the latter cannot be altogether neglected.

It is better to be too exquisite in your carefulness about your letters than in the slightest degree careless. The art of letter-writing comes from knowledge and constant practice.

Your letters, now, ought to be careful works of art. Intelligent—remember I say *intelligent*—care is the basis of all perfection; and perfection in small things means success in

great. In our world the specialist, the man who does at least one thing as well as he can, is sure to succeed; and so overcrowded are the avenues to success becoming that a man to succeed must be a specialist and know how to do at least one thing better than his fellow-men.

If you happen to have a rich father, you may say, "It does not make much difference; I shall have an easy time of it all my life. I can spell 'applicant' with two 'c's' if I like and it will not make any difference."

This is a very foolish idea. The richer you are, the greater will be your responsibilities, the more will you be criticised and found fault with, and you will find it will take all your ability to keep together or to spend wisely what your father has acquired. The late John Jacob Astor worked harder than any of his clerks; in the street he looked careworn and preoccupied; and he often lamented that poor men did not know how hard it was to be rich. His hearers often felt that they would like to exchange hardships with him. But he never, in spite

of his sorrows, gave them a chance. It is true, however, that a rich man needs careful education even more than a poor man. And even politicians have to spell decently. You have perhaps heard of the man who announced in a letter that he was a "g-r-a-t-e-r man than Grant."

Usage decrees certain forms in the writing of letters; and the knowledge and practice of these forms are absolutely necessary. For instance, one must be very particular to give each man his title. Although we Americans are supposed to despise titles, the frequency with which they are borrowed in this country shows that we are not free from a weakness for them. You have perhaps heard the old story of the man who entered a country tavern in Kentucky and called out to a friend, "Major!" Twenty majors at once arose.

You will find that if you desire to keep the regard of your friends you must be careful in letter-writing to give each man his title. Every man over twenty-one years of age is "Esquire" in this country. Plain "Mr."

will do for young people—except the youngest "juniors," who are only "Masters;" everybody else, from the lawyer, who is rightly entitled to "Esquire," to the hod-carrier, must have that title affixed to his name, or he feels that the man who writes to him is guilty of a disrespect. A member of Congress, of the Senate of the United States, of the State legislatures, has "Honorable" prefixed to his Christian name, and he does not like you to forget it. But a member of the British Parliament is never called "Honorable." When Mr. Parnell and Mr. William O'Brien, both members of Parliament, were here, this rule was not observed, and they found themselves titled, much to their amazement, "Honorable."

Except in business letters, it is better not to abbreviate anything. Do not write "Jno." for "John," or. "Wm." for "William." "Mister" is always shortened into "Mr.," and "Mistress" into "Mrs.," which custom pronounces "Missus." If one is addressing an archbishop, one writes, "The Most Reverend Archbishop;" a bishop, "The Right

Reverend ;" and a priest, " The Reverend"—always " The Reverend," never " Rev."

Titles such as " A.M.," " B.A.," " LL.D.," are not generally put on the envelopes of letters, unless the business of the writer has something to do with the scholarly position of the person addressed. If, for instance, I write to a Doctor of Laws and Letters, asking him to dinner, I do not put LL.D. after his name; but if I am asking him to tell me something about Greek accents, or to solve a question of literature, I, of course, write his title after his name.

To put one's knife into one's mouth means social exile ; there is only one other infraction of social rules considered more damning, and this is the writing of an anonymous letter. It is understood, in good society, that a man who would write a letter which he is afraid to sign with his own name would lie or steal. And I believe he would. If he happen to be found out—and there are no secrets in this world—he will be cut dead by every man and woman for whom he has any respect. If he belong to a decent club, the

club will drop him, and he will be blackballed by every club he tries to enter. By the very act of writing such a letter he brands himself a coward. And if the letter be a malicious one, he confesses himself in every line of it a scoundrel. A man capable of such a thing shows it in his face, above all in his eyes, for nature cannot keep such a secret.

Another sin against good manners, which young people sometimes thoughtlessly commit, is the writing to people whom they do not know. This is merely an impertinence ; it is not a crime ; the persons that get such letters simply look on the senders as fools, not as cowards or scoundrels.

Usage at the present time decrees that all social letters should be written on *unruled* paper, and that, if possible, the envelope should be square. An oblong envelope will do, but a square one is considered to be the better of the two ; the paper should be folded to fit under. The envelope and the paper should always be as good as you can buy. Money is never wasted on excellent paper and envelopes. It is one of the marks of

a gentleman to have his paper and envelopes as spotless and well made as his collar and cuffs.

A man ought never to use colored paper, or paper with a monogram or a crest or coat-of-arms on it. If you happen to have a coat-of-arms or a crest, keep it at home; anybody in this country who wants it can get it. White paper and black ink should be used by men; leave the flowers and the monograms and the pink, blue, and black paper to the ladies. It is just as much out of place for one of us to write on pink paper as to wear a bracelet.

Bad spelling is a social crime and a business crime, too. No business house will employ in any important position a young man who spells badly. He may become a porter or a janitor, but he can never rise above that if he cannot spell.

In social letters or notes, one misspelled word is like a discord in music. It is as if the big drum were to come in at the wrong time and spoil a cornet solo, or a careless stroke ruin a fine regatta. When dictionaries are so

numerous, bad spelling is unpardonable, and it is seldom pardoned.

One of the worst possible breaches of good manners is to write a careless letter to any one to whom you owe affection and respect. Nothing is too good for your father or mother —nothing on this earth. When you begin to think otherwise, you may be certain that *you* are growing unworthy of affection and respect.

There is a story told of one of the greatest soldiers that this country ever knew, who, though he happened to fight against us, deserves our most respectful homage; this brave soldier was the Confederate general Sidney Johnston. A soldier had been arrested as a traitor on the eve of a battle. The testimony was against him; there was no time to sift it, and General Johnston ordered him to be shot before the assembled army. A comrade who believed in him, but who had no evidence in his favor, made a last appeal. When the soldier was arrested, he had been in the act of writing a letter to his father. He begged this comrade to secure it and send it

home, giving him permission to read it. The comrade read it and took it to General Johnston. It was an honest, loving letter such as a good son would write to a kind father. It was carefully written. General Johnston read it, expecting to find some sign of treason there. He read it twice; and then he said to the comrade: "Why did you bring this to me?"

"To show you, general," the soldier answered, "that a man who could write such a letter to his father on the eve of battle could not have the heart of a traitor."

"You are right," General Johnston said, after a pause; "let the man be released."

He was released, and later it was discovered that he had been wrongly suspected. He was killed in that battle. Such a son would rather have died a hundred times than have such a father know that he had been shot or hanged as a traitor.

The letters we write home ought to be as carefully written as possible. *There is nothing too good for your father or mother.* They may not always tell you so; but you may be

sure that a well-written and affectionate letter from you brightens life very much for them. Have you ever seen a father who had a boy at school draw from his pocket a son's letter and show it to his friends with eyes glistening with pleasure? I have. "There's a boy for you!" he says. "There is a manly, cheerful letter written to *me*, sir, and written as well as any man in this country can write it!" If you have ever seen a father in that proud and happy mood, you know how your father feels when you treat him with the consideration which is his due. Your mothers treasure your letters and give them a value they do not, I am afraid, often really possess. If you desire to appear well before the world, begin by correcting and improving yourself at school and out of school. A young man who writes a slovenly letter to his parents will probably drop into carelessness when he writes formal letters to people outside his domestic circle.

It is a good rule to answer every letter during the week of its receipt. It is as rude to refuse to answer a question politely put as

to leave a letter without an answer—provided the writer of the letter is a person you know.

Some young people are capable of addressing the President as "Dear Friend," or of doing what, according to a certain authority, a young person did in Baltimore. This uncouth young person was presented to Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore. "Hello, Arch.!" he said—and I fear that his friends who were present wished that he were dead.

"Dear Sir" is always a proper form to begin a letter with to anybody older than ourselves, or to anybody we do not know intimately. And if we begin by "Dear Sir," we should not end with "Yours most affectionately." "Yours respectfully" or "Yours sincerely" would be the better form. To end a letter with "Yours, etc.," is justly considered in the worst possible taste; and it is almost as bad as to begin a letter with "Friend Jones," or "Friend Smith," or "Friend John" or "Tom." The Quakers address one another as "friend;" we do not.

Begin with "Dear John" or "Dear Tom," or even "Dear Jones" or "Dear Brown," if you like, but do not use the prefix "friend." In writing to an entire stranger, one may use the third person, or begin with "Sir" or "Madam." Suppose, for instance, you want some information from a librarian you do not know personally. You may write in this way:

"Mr. Berry would be much obliged to Mr. Bibliophile for Dr. St. George Mivart's book on 'The Cat,' which he will return as soon as possible."

Or Mr. Berry would say:

"SIR: I should be much obliged if you would lend me Dr. St. George Mivart's book on 'The Cat.'

"Yours respectfully."

No man in decent society ever puts "Mr." before his own name, except on visiting-cards. There, usage has made it proper. A married lady or a young girl always has "Mrs." or "Miss" on her cards, and, of late, men have got into the habit of putting "Mr." on theirs. No man of taste ever puts "Mr." before or

"Esq."* after his own name when signing a letter.

Another fault against taste is a habit—prevalent only in America—of writing social letters under business headings. Here is an example:

J. J. ROBINSON & CO.,
New York.
Manufacturers and Dealers in the Newest Styles of Coffins, Caskets, and Embalming Fluids.
Orders carefully attended to.
All payments C. O. D.
No deductions for damages allowed after thirty days.

Under that heading appears a note of congratulation:

"DEAR TOM: I hasten to congratulate you on your marriage. Believe me, I wish you every blessing, and if you should ever need anything in my line, you will always receive the greatest possible reduction in price. May you live long and prosper!

"Yours very affectionately,

"J. J. ROBINSON."

This is an extreme example, I admit; but who has not seen social notes written under

* The title Esq. really belongs only to those connected with the legal profession, but republican usage has much extended it.

business headings just as incongruous? When we write to anybody not on business, let us use spotless white paper without lines; let the paper and envelopes be as thick as possible; and let us not put any ornamental flower, or crest, or coat-of-arms, or any bit of nonsense at the top of our letters. The address ought to be written plainly at the head of our letter-paper, or printed if you will. And if we begin a letter with "Dear Sir," we ought to write in the left-hand corner of the last sheet the name of the person to whom the letter is addressed. But if we begin a letter with "Dear Mr. Robinson," it is not necessary to write Mr. Robinson's name again. If a man gets an invitation written in the third person he must answer it in the third person. If

"Mrs. J. J. Smith requests the pleasure of Mr. J. J. Jones's company at dinner on Wednesday, April 23, at seven o'clock,"

young Mr. J. J. Jones would stamp himself as ignorant of the ways of society if he wrote back:

"DEAR MRS. SMITH: I will come, of course. If I am a little late, keep something on the fire for me. I shall be umpire at a base-ball match that afternoon, and I shall be hungry. Good-by.

"Yours devotedly,

"J. J. JONES."

You may be sure that if young Mr. Jones should put in an appearance after that note he would find the door closed in his face.

An invitation to dinner must be accepted or declined on the day it is received. One is not permitted to say he will come if he can. He must say Yes or No at once. The words "polite," "genteel," and "present compliments" are no longer used. "Your kind invitation" now takes the place of "your polite invitation;" and "genteel" is out of date. The letters "R. S. V. P." are no longer put on notes or cards. It is thought it is not necessary to tell, in French, people to "answer, if you please." All well-educated people are pleased to answer without being told to do so. The custom of putting "R. S. V. P." in a note is as much out of fashion as that of drawing off a glove

when one shakes hands. In the olden times, when men wore armor, a hand clothed in a steel or iron gauntlet was not pleasant to touch. There was then a reason why a man should draw off his glove when he extended his hand to another, especially if that other happened to be a lady. But the reason for the custom has gone by; and it is not necessary to draw off one's glove now when one shakes hands.

But to return to the subject of letter-writing. If you are addressing a Doctor of Medicine or Divinity, you may put "Esq." after his name in addition to his title "M.D." or "D.D.;" but it is a senseless custom. But "Mr." and "Esq." before and after a man's name sends the writer, in the estimation of well-bred people, to "the bottom of the sea." Paper with gilt edges is never used; in fact, a man must not have anything about him that is merely pretty. Usage decrees that he may wear a flower in his button-hole—and Americans are becoming as fond of flowers as the ancient Romans; but farther than that he may not go, in the

way of the merely ornamental, either in his stationery or his clothes.

It is the fashion now to fasten envelopes with wax and to use a seal; but it is not at all necessary, though there are many who prefer it, as they object to get a letter which has been "licked" to make its edges stick.

Begin, in addressing a stranger, with "Madam" or "Sir." "Miss" by itself is never used. After a second letter has been received, "Dear Madam" or "Dear Sir" may be used. Conclude all formal letters with "Yours truly," or "Sincerely yours," not "Affectionately yours." Sign your full name when writing to a friend or an equal. Do not write "T. F. Robinson" or "T. T. Smith;" write your name out as if you were not ashamed of it.

Put your address at the head of your letters, and if you make a blot, tear up the paper. A dirty letter sent, even with an apology, is as bad a breach of good manners as the extending of a dirty hand. Answer at once any letter in which information is asked. Do not write to people you do not

know or answer advertisements in the papers "for fun." A man that knows the world never does this. These advertisements often hide traps, and a man may get into them merely by writing a letter. And the kind of "fun" which ends in a man's being pursued by vulgar postal cards and letters wherever he goes does not pay.

In writing a letter, do not begin too close to the top of the page, or too far down towards the middle. Do not abbreviate when you can help it; you may write "Dr." for "Doctor."

Do not put a yellow envelope over a sheet of white note-paper. It is not necessary to leave *wide* margin at the left-hand side. A habit now is to write only on one side of the paper; to begin your letter on the first page, then to go to the third, then back to the second, ending, if you have a great deal to say, on the fourth. A late fad is to jump from the first to the fourth.

With a good dictionary at his elbow, black ink, white paper, a clear head, and a remembrance of the rules and prohibitions I have

given, any young man cannot fail, if he write, to impress all who receive his letters with the fact that he is well-bred.

VII. What to Read.

YOUNG people who determine to study English literature seriously sometimes find themselves discouraged by the multitude of books; consequently they get into an idle way of accepting opinions at second hand—the ready-made opinions of the text-book. In order to study English literature, it is not necessary to read many books; but it is necessary to read a few books carefully. The evident insincerity of some of the people who "go in" for literary culture has given the humorous paragrapher, often on the verge of paresis from trying to be funny every day, many a straw to grasp at. There is no doubt that some of his gibes and sneers are deserved, and that others, undeserved, serve as cheap stock in trade for people who are too idle or too stupid to take any interest in literary matters.

Literary insincerity and pretension are suf-

ficiently bad, but they are not worse than the superficial and silly jeers at poetry and art in the line of the worn-out witticisms about the "spring poet" and the "mother-in-law."

The young woman who thinks it the proper thing to go into ecstasies over Robert Browning without having read a line of the poet's work, except, perhaps, "How They Carried the News from Ghent to Aix," is foolish enough; but is the man who sneers at Browning and knows even less about him any better? The earnest student of literature makes no pretensions. He reads a few books well, and by that obtains the key to the understanding of all others. He does not pretend to admire epics he has not read. He knows, of course, that the *Nibelungenlied* is the great German epic; but he does not talk about it as if he had studied and weighed every line. If he finds that the *Inferno* of Dante is more interesting than the *Paradiso*, he says so without fear, and he does not express ready-made opinions without having probed them. If the perfection of good

manners is simplicity, the perfection of literary culture is sincerity.

Among Catholics there sometimes crops out a kind of insincerity which almost amounts to snobbishness. It is the tendency to praise no book until it has had a non-Catholic approbation. Now that Dr. Gasquet's remarkable volume on the suppression of the English monasteries and Father Bridgett's "Sir Thomas More" have received the highest praise in England and swept Mr. Froude's historical rubbish aside, there are Catholics who will not hesitate to respect them, although they did hesitate before the popular laudation was given to these two great books.

When a reader has begun to acquire the rudiments of literary taste, he ought to choose the books he likes; but he cannot be trusted to choose books for himself until he has—perhaps with some labor—gained taste. All men are born with taste very unequally developed. A man cannot, I repeat, hope to gain a correct judgment in literary matters unless he works for it.

Mr. Frederick Harrison says: "When will men understand that the reading of great books is a faculty to be acquired, not a natural gift, at least to those who are spoiled by our current education and habits of life? An insatiable appetite for new novels makes it as hard to read a masterpiece as it seems to a Parisian boulevardier to live in a quiet country. Until a man can really enjoy a draught of clear water bubbling from a mountain-side, his taste is in an unwholesome state. To understand a great national poet, such as Dante, Calderon, Corneille, or Goethe, is to know other types of human civilization in ways which a library of histories does not sufficiently teach."

Mr. Harrison is right. It is not always easy to like good books; but it is easier to train the young to like them than to cleanse the perverted taste of the older. The chief business of the teacher of literature ought to be the cultivation of taste. At his best, he can do no more than that; at his worst, he can fill the head of the student with mere names and dates and undigested opinions.

When the student of literature begins really to enjoy Shakspere, his taste has begun to be formed. He may read the "Vicar of Wakefield" after that without a yawn, and learn to enjoy the quiet humor of Charles Lamb. He finds himself raised into pure air, above the malaria of exaggeration and sensationalism. His style in writing insensibly improves; he becomes critical of the slang and careless English of his every-day speech; and surely these things are worth all the trouble spent in gaining them. Besides, he has secured a perpetual solace for those long nights—and perhaps days—of loneliness which must come to nearly every man when he begins to grow old. After religion, there is no comfort in life, when the links of love begin to break, like a love for great literature. But this love must be genuine; pretence will not avail; nor will mere "top-dressing" be of any use.

Literature used to be considered in the light of a "polite accomplishment." A book of "elegant extracts" skimmed through was the only means deemed necessary for the

acquirement of an education in letters. It means a very different thing now, and the establishment of the reading circles has emphasized its meaning for Catholic Americans. It means, first of all, some knowledge of philology; it means a critical understanding of the value of the stones that make up the great mosaic of literature, and these stones are words.

A bit of Addison, a chunk of Gibbon, a taste of Macaulay, no longer reach the ideal of what a student of English literature should read. We first form our taste, and then read for ourselves. We do not even accept Cardinal Newman's estimate of "The Vision of Mirza" or "Thalaba" without inquiry; nor do we throw up our hats for Browning merely because Browning has become fashionable. A healthy sign of a robuster taste is the return to Pope, the poet of common-sense, and to Walter Scott. But we accept neither of these writers on a cut-and-dried judgment made by somebody else. It is better to give two months to the reading of Pope and about Pope than to fill two months with desultory

reading and take an opinion of Pope at second hand.

In spite of the ordinary text-book of literature, the serious student discovers that Dryden is a poet and prose-writer of the first rank, that Newman is the greatest thinker and stylist of modern times, that no dramatic writer of the last two centuries has come so near Shakspere as Aubrey de Vere, and that Coventry Patmore's prose is delightful. If all the students of literature that read "A GENTLEMAN" have not discovered these things for themselves, let them take up any one of these writers seriously, perseveringly, and contradict me if they think I am wrong.

Matthew Arnold showed long ago that, if the basis of English literature was Saxon, its curves, its form, its symmetry, its beauty, were derived from the qualities of that other race which the Saxons drove out. Similarly, if the author of that Saxon epic, the "*Beowulf*," if Cædmon and the Venerable Bede uttered high thoughts, it was reserved for Chaucer to wed high thoughts to a form borrowed from the French and Italians. Chaucer

saved the English language from remaining a collection of inadequate dialects. The Teutonic element supplied his strength; the Celtic element his lightness and elegance. Now this Chaucer was a very humble and devout Catholic. "Ah! but he pointed out abuses—he was the Lollard, enlightened by the morning-star of the Reformation," the text-books of English literature have been saying for many years. "See what he insinuates about the levity of his pilgrims to Canterbury!" All of which has nothing to do with his firm faith in the Catholic Church.

Chaucer was inspired by the intensely Christian Dante and the exquisite Petrarch, but, unfortunately, he took too much from another master—the greatest master of Italian prose, Boccaccio. When I use the word Christian, I mean Catholic—the words are interchangeable; and Dante is the most Christian of all poets.

But Boccaccio was a Christian; he had faith; he could be serious; he loved Dante; his collection of stories, which no man is jus-

tified in reading, unless it is for their Italian style, has attracted every English poet of narrative verse, from Chaucer to Tennyson; and yet, though these stories have moments of pathos and elevation, they are full of the fetid breath of paganism. A pope suppressed them; but their style saved them—for art was a passion in Italy—and they were revived, somewhat expurgated. In his old age he lamented the effects of his early book.

The occasional coarseness in Chaucer we owe to the manners of the times; for the English, far behind the Italians, were just awakening from semi-barbarism. Dante had crystallized the Italian language long before Chaucer was born. Italy had produced the precursor of Dante, St. Francis of Assisi, and a host of other great men, whose fame that of St. Francis and Dante dimmed by comparison, long before the magnificent English language came out of chaos. The few lapses in morality in Chaucer are due both to the influence of Boccaccio and to the paganism latent in a people who were gradually becoming fully converted. But the power of

Christianity protected Chaucer; the teaching of the Church was part of his very life, and nothing could be more pathetic, more honest than his plea for pardon. The Church had taught him to love chastity; if he sinned in word, he sinned against light. The Church gave him the safeguards for his genius; the dross he gathered from the earthiness around him. Of the latter, there is little enough.

Chaucer was born in 1340; Dante in 1265; and Dante helped to create the English poet. Italy was the home of the greatest and noblest men of all the world, and these men had revived pagan art in order to baptize it and make it a child of Christ. Chaucer has suffered more than any other poet at the hands of the text-book makers, who have conspired for over three hundred years against the truth. We have been made to see him through a false medium. We have been told that he was in revolt against the religion which he loved as his life. He loved the Mother of God with a childlike fervor; a modern Presbyterian would have been as much of a heretic to him as a Moslem; he

was as loyal a child of the Church as ever lived, and to regard him as anything else is to stamp one as of that old and ignorant school of Philistines which all cultivated Americans have learned to detest.

The best book for the study of this poet is Cowden Clarke's "Riches of Chaucer" (London: Crosby, Lockwood & Co.), the knowledge of which I owe to the kindness of Mr. Aubrey de Vere. And his works will repay study; Mr. Cowden Clarke arranged them so that they can be read with ease and, after a short time, with pleasure. To see Chaucer through anybody's eyes is to see him through a darkened glass. Why should not we, so much nearer to him than any of the commentators who have assumed to explain him to us, take possession of him? He should not be an alien to us; the form of the ink-horn he held has changed; but the rosary that fell from his fingers was the same as our rosary.

English literature began with Chaucer. He loved God and he loved humanity; he could laugh like a child because he had the

faith of a child. His strength lay in his faith; and, as faith weakened, English poets looked back more and more regretfully at the "merrie" meads sprinkled with the daisies he loved. He is as cheerful as Sir Thomas More; as gay, yet as sympathetic with human pleasure and pain, as the Dominican monks whom he loved. If he jibed at abuses—if he saw that luxury and avarice were beginning to creep into monasteries and palaces—he knew well that the remedy lay in greater union with Rome. Like Francis of Assisi, he was a poet, but a poet who loved even the defects of humanity, and who preferred to laugh at them rather than to reform them. Unlike Francis of Assisi, he was not a saint. He was intensely interested in the world around him; he was of it and in it; and he belongs doubly to us—the *Alma Redemptoris*, one of his favorite hymns, which he mentions in "Tale of the Prioress," we hear at vespers as he heard it. The faith in which he died in 1400 is our faith to-day.

In no age have been the written masterpieces of genius within such easy reach of all

readers. But it is true that older people, living at a time when books were dearer and libraries fewer than they are now, read better books; not *more* books, but *better* books. Probably in those days people amused themselves less outside their own homes. Some tell us that the tone of thought was more solid and serious. At any rate, the English classics had more influence on the American reader fifty years ago than they have to-day. The time had its drawbacks, to be sure. An old gentleman often told me of a visit to a Pennsylvania farm in the thirties, when the man of the house gave him, as a precious thing, a copy of *The Catholic Herald* two years old! Now the paper of yesterday seems almost a century old; then the paper of last year was new.

Unhappily, the book of last year suffers the same fate as the paper of yesterday. The best way to counteract this unhappy condition of affairs is to clasp a good book to one with "hoops of steel" when such a book is found.

In considering the subject of literature,

there is one great book which is seldom mentioned. This is Denis Florence MacCarthy's translations from Calderon.

Calderon ought not to be a stranger to us. He approaches very near to Dante in deep religious feeling, and he is not far behind him in genius. If no good translation of some of his most representative works existed, there might be an excuse for the general neglect of this great author by English-speaking readers. And MacCarthy has done justice to those sublime, sacred dramas, called "autos," in which all the resources of faith and genius are laid at the feet of God. It is to be hoped that in a few years both MacCarthy and Mangan may be recognized. Those who know the former only by his "Waiting for the May" will broaden their field of literary knowledge and gain a higher respect for him through his translations of Calderon. The names of Calderon, the greatest of the Spanish poets, and of MacCarthy, his chief translator, suggest that of another author too little known to the general reader. This is Kenelm Henry Digby, whose "Mores

Catholici" is a magazine of ammunition for the Christian reader.

There is an amusing scene in one of Thackeray's novels, where a journalist acknowledges that he finds all the classical quotations which garnish his articles in Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy;" and, indeed, many other things besides bits of Latin have been appropriated from Burton and Montaigne, in our time, by ready writers. Many a sparkling thought put into the crisp English of the nineteenth century may be traced back to Boethius. And who shall condemn this? Has not Shakspere set us an example of how gold, half buried in ore, may be polished until it is an inestimable jewel? Kenelm Digby's "Mores Catholici" is a great magazine from which a thousand facts may be gathered, each fact pregnant with suggestion and stimulus. Sharp-pointed arrows against calumny are here: all they need is a light shaft and feather and a strong hand to send them home. Is an illustration for a sermon wanted? Is a fact on which to found an essay demanded? One

has only to open the "Mores." It is not a book which one reads with intense interest; one cannot gallop through the three large volumes—one must walk, laboriously stowing away every treasure. It is, in fact, a book through which one saunters, picking something at long intervals, perhaps. You may dip into it, as a boy dives for a cent, and come up with a pearl-oyster in your hand. It is a book to be kept on the lowest shelf, within reach at all times; at any rate, to be one of the books to which you go when you are in search of a fact or an illustration.

One of the few sonnets written by Denis Florence MacCarthy was addressed to Digby. Digby had painted a picture of Calderon and sent it to the Irish poet; hence the sonnet—

"Thou who hast left, as in a sacred shrine,—
What shrine more pure than thy unspotted page?—
The priceless relics of a heritage
Of loftiest thoughts and lessons most divine."

And so the names of Calderon and MacCarthy and Digby come naturally together; and they are the names of men each

great in his way. They are not found in the newspapers; they are seldom seen in the great magazines; those societies of the cultivated which are—thank Heaven!—multiplying everywhere for the better understanding of books know very little about them. Let us hope that Miss Imogene Guiney, who wrote so well of Mangan in one of the numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, will do a similar kind office for MacCarthy.

As to Calderon, he can be read but in parts. Like Milton, he travelled over many a barren stretch of prose thinking it poetry; and so we will be wise to follow MacCarthy's lead in choosing from his dramas. He is so little known among us for the reason that we have permitted the English taste—which became Protestantized—to separate us from him. It is to the German Goethe that we owe the revival of the taste for Dante. Before Goethe rediscovered him, the English-speaking people of the world held that there were only two great poets—Shakspere and Milton.

To reclaim our heritage, we must know

something of Calderon. There is no reason why our horizon should be limited to that which English Protestantism has uncovered for us. Calderon represents the literature of Catholic Spain at its highest point ; and even the most narrow-minded man, having read a fair number of the pages of Calderon, can deny neither his ardent devotion to the Church nor his high genius, nor can he disprove that they existed together, free and untrammelled. We have been told that the outbreak of literary genius in the reign of Elizabeth was but the outcome of the liberty of the Reformation. How did it happen that Spain, in which there was no Reformation, produced Columbus, Calderon, Cervantes, and Italy illustrious names by the legion? Knowledge, after all, is the only antidote to the miasma of ignorance and arrogance which has clouded the judgment of so many writers on literature and art.

VIII. The Home Book-shelf.

IT ought not to be so much our practice to denounce bad books as to point out good ones. To say that a book is immoral is to increase its sale. But the more good books we put into the hands of our boys, the greater preservative powers we give them against evil. Here is a bit from the Kansas City *Star* which expresses tersely what we have all been thinking:

"The truth is that it is not the boys who read 'bad books' who swell the roll of youthful criminality; it is the boys who do not read anything. Let any one look over the police court of a busy morning, and he will see that the style of youth gathered there have not fallen into evil ways through their depraved literary tendencies. They were not brought there by books, but more probably by ignorance of books combined with a genuine hatred of books of all kinds. There is not a more perfect picture of innocence in the world than a boy buried in his favorite book, oblivious to all earthly sights

and sounds, scarcely breathing as he follows the fortunes of the heroes and heroines of the story."

It depends, of course, on what kind of a story it is. A boy may be a picture of innocence; but we all know that many a canvas on which is a picture of innocence is much worm-eaten at the back. If the book be a good one, a boy is safe while he is reading it—he can be no safer. If it is a mere story of adventure, without any dangerous sentiment, a boy is not likely to get harm out of it. It is the sentimental—not the honest sentiment of Sir Walter or Thackeray—that does harm to the boy of a certain age, but more harm to the girl. A boy's preoccupation with his book may not be always innocent. It is a father's or mother's duty to see that it is innocent, by supplying the boy with the right kind of books. This, in our atmosphere, is almost as much of a duty as the supplying him with bread and butter. A father may take the lowest view of his duties; he may be content with having his son taught the Little Catechism and with feeding and clothing him. However sufficient this may

be among the peasants of the Tyrol, it does not answer in our country. The boy who cares to read nothing except the daily paper or the theatrical poster has more chances against him than the devourer of books. The police courts show that.

The parish library, as a help to religious and moral education, comes next to the parish school; it supplements it; it amplifies its instruction: its carries its influence deeper; it cultivates both the logical powers and the imagination. Give a boy a taste for books, and he has a consolation which neither sickness nor poverty nor age itself can take from him. But he must not be left to ramble through a library at his own sweet will. There are probably no stricter Catholics among our acquaintance than were the parents of Alexander Pope, the "poet of common-sense" and bad philosophy; and yet their carelessness, or rather faith in books merely as books, led him into many an ethical error.

There is no use in trying to restrict the reading of a clever American boy to professedly Catholic books in the English lan-

guage. He will ask for stories, and there are not enough stories of the right sort to last him very long. He will want stories with plenty of action in them—stirring stories, stories of adventure, stories of school life, of life in his own country; and we have too few of them. And it requires some discrimination to square his wants with what he ought to want. But that discrimination must be used by somebody, or there will be danger.

Nevertheless, the boy who rushes through Oliver Optic's stories, and Henty's and Bolderwood's, is not likely to be injured. They are not ideal books, from our point of view. He may even read Charles Kingsley's boisterous, stupid stuff; but if he is a well-instructed boy, he will be in a state of hot indignation all through "Hypatia" and the other underdone-roast-beefy things of that bigot. Kingsley, with all his prejudice, though, is better for a boy than Rider Haggard. There is a nasty trail over Haggard's stories.

There is some comfort in the fact that the average boy is too eagerly intent on his story

to mind the moralizing. What does he care for Lord Lytton's talk about the Good, the True, and the Beautiful in "The Last Days of Pompeii"? He wants to know how everything "turns out." And in Kingsley's "Hypatia"—which is so often in Catholic libraries—he pays very little attention to the historical lies, for the sake of the action. Nevertheless, he should be guarded against the historical lies. Personally—I hope this intrusion of the *ego* will be forgiven—I had, when I was a boy and waded through all sorts of books, so strong a conviction that Catholics were always right and every one else wrong, that "Hypatia" and Bulwer's "Harold" and the rest were mere incentives to zeal; I thought that if the Lady Abbess walled up Constance at the end of "Marmion," that young person deserved her fate.

This state of mind, however, ought not to be generally cultivated; a discriminating taste for reading should. Do not let us cry out so loudly about bad books; let us seek out the good ones; and remember that it is not the reading boy that fills the criminal ranks, but

the boy that lives in the streets and does not read.

There should be a few books on the family shelf—books which are meant to be daily companions—the Bible, the "Imitation of Christ," something of Father Faber's, "Fabiola" and "Dion and the Sibyls," and some great novels.

People of to-day do not realize how much the greatest of all the romancers owes to the Catholic Dryden. Sir Walter Scott, in spite of frequent change in public taste, still holds his own. Cardinal Newman, in one of his letters, regrets that young people have ceased to be interested in so admirable a writer. But there is only partial reason for this regret. Sir Walter's long introductions and some of his elaborate descriptions of natural scenery are no longer read with interest. Still, it is evident that people do not care to have his works changed in any way. Not long ago, Miss Braddon, the indefatigable novelist, "edited" Sir Walter Scott's novels. She cut out all those passages which seemed dull to her. But the public refused to

read the improved edition. It remained unsold.

It is safe to predict that neither Sir Walter Scott nor Miss Austen will ever go entirely out of fashion. Sir Walter's muse is to Miss Austen's as the Queen of Sheba to a very prim modern gentlewoman: one is attired in splendid apparel, wreathed with jewels, sparkling; the other is neutral-tinted, timid, shy. But of all novelists, Sir Walter Scott admired Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen. He said, with almost a sigh of regret, that he could do the big "bow-wow" business, but that they pictured real life.

Nevertheless, while Miss Austen is not forgotten—in fact, interest has increased in her delightful books of late years—Sir Walter Scott's novels are found everywhere. Not to have read the most notable of the Waverley Novels is to give one's acquaintances just reason for lamenting one's illiberal education.

The name of Sir Walter Scott naturally suggests that of Dryden, from whom the "Wizard" borrowed some of the best things

in "Ivanhoe"—and "Ivanhoe" is without doubt the most popular of Sir Walter Scott's novels. That picturesque humbug Macaulay, who could sacrifice anything for a brilliant antithesis, has done much harm to the reputation of Dryden. He gives us the impression that Dryden was a mere timeserver, if a brilliant satirist and a third-rate poet. Some years will pass before the superficial criticism of Macaulay shall be taken at its full value. Dryden was honest—honest in his changes of opinion, and entirely consistent in his change of faith. No church but that of his ancestors could have satisfied the mind of a man to whom the mutilated doctrine and bald services of the Anglican sect were naturally obnoxious. Of the charge that Dryden changed his religious opinions for gain, Mr. John Amphlett Evans, a sympathetic critic, says that, if Dryden gained the approval of King James II., he lost that of the English people. Dryden understood this, for he wrote:

> "If joys hereafter must be purchased here
> With loss of all that mortals hold so dear,

> Then welcome infamy and public shame,
> And last, a long farewell to worldly fame."

If Scott, through ignorance or carelessness, misrepresented certain Catholic practices, he never consciously misrepresented Catholic ideas; and, as a recent writer in the *Dublin Review* remarks, he showed that all that was best and heroic in the Middle Ages was the result of Catholic teaching. This was his attraction for Cardinal Newman. This made him so fascinating to another convert, James A. McMaster, who had an inherited Calvinistic horror of most other novels. Scott, robust and broad-minded as he was, could understand the mighty genius and the great heart of Dryden. He was the ablest defender of the poet who abjured the licentiousness of the Restoration—mirrored in his earlier dramas—to adopt a purer mode of thought. Although Dryden was really Scott's master in art, Sir Walter did not fully understand how very great was Dryden's poem, "Almanzor and Almahide." If Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," or Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso," or Milton's "Paradise Regained,"

or Fénelon's "Telemachus" is an epic, this splendid poem of Dryden's is an epic, and greater than them all. It is from this poem, founded on episodes of the siege of Granada, that Sir Walter Scott borrows so liberally in "Ivanhoe."

One cannot altogether pardon the greatest fault of all Sir Walter made, the punishment of Constance in "Marmion." But his theory of artistic effect was something like Macaulay's idea of rhetorical effect. If picturesqueness or dramatic effect interfered with historical truth, the latter suffered the necessary carving to make it fit. It must be remembered, too, that Sir Walter Scott was not in a position to profit by modern discoveries which have forced all honorable men to revise many pages of the falsified histories of their youth and to do justice to the spirit of the Church.

Sir Walter Scott is always chivalrous and pure-minded. How he would have detested Froude's brutal characterization of Mary Stuart, or Swinburne's vile travesty of her! If his friars are more jolly than respectable,

it is because he drew his pictures from popular ballads and old stories never intended in Catholic times to be taken as serious or typical. His Templars are horrible villains, but he never seems to regard them as villanous because they are ecclesiastics; he does not intend to drag their priesthood into disgrace; they are lawless and romantic figures, loaded with horrible accusations by Philippe le Bel, and condemned by the Pope—ready-made romantic scoundrels fit for purposes of fiction. He does not look beyond this.

Scott shows much of the nobility of Dryden's later work. He does not confuse good with evil; he is always tender of good sentiments; he hates vice and all meanness; in depicting so many fine characters who could only have bloomed in a Catholic atmosphere, he shows a sympathy for the "old Church" at once pathetic and admirable to a Catholic. There is no novel of his in which the influence of the Church is not alluded to in some way or other. And how delightful are his heroines when they are Catholic! How charmingly he has drawn Mary Stuart!

And the man that does not love Di Vernon and Catherine Seton has no heart for Beatrice or Portia. And then there is the grand figure of Edward Glendenning in "The Abbot."

Dryden and Scott both owed so much to the Church, were so naturally her children, that one feels no ordinary satisfaction in the conversion of the one, and some consolation in the fact that the last words of the other were those of the "Dies Irae."

Brownson and Newman are two authors more talked about than read in this country. In England Newman's most careful literary work is known; Brownson's work has only begun to receive attention. Newman has gained much by being talked and written about by men who love the form of things as much as the matter, and who, if Newman had taught Buddhism or Schopenhauerism, would admire him just as much. As there is a large class of these men, and as they help to form public opinion, it has come to pass that he who would deny Newman's mastery of style would be smiled at in any assembly

of men of letters. Brownson has not had such an advantage. He gave his attention thoroughly to the matter in hand; style was with him a secondary consideration. Besides, he wrote from the American point of view, and sometimes—at least it would seem so—under pressure from the printer. Newman was never hurried; Horace was not more leisurely, Cicero more exact. It would be absurd to compare Newman and Brownson. I simply put their names together to show that they should be read, even if other writers must be neglected, by Catholic Americans. I take the liberty of recommending three books as valuable additions to the home shelf:—Brownson's "Views," and the "Characteristics" of Wiseman and Newman.

Every young American who wants to understand the political position of his country among the nations should read three books—Brownson's "American Republic," De Tocqueville's "Democracy in America," and Bryce's "American Commonwealth." But of these three writers the greatest—incomparably the greatest—is Brownson: he de-

fines principles; he clarifies them until they are luminous; he shows the application of them to a new condition of things. There have been Catholics—why disguise the fact, since they are nearly all dead or imbecile?—who fancied that our form of government was merely tolerated by the Church. Brownson gave a death-blow to those ancient dragons of unbelief. Certain parts of this great work ought to be a text book in every school in the country. And it will now be easier to build a monument to this profound thinker, as there is a well-considered attempt to popularize such portions of his books as must catch the general attention, for there are many pages in Brownson's works which are hidden only because they suffered in their original method of publication.

Open a volume of his works at random, and you will find something to suggest or stimulate thought, to define a term or to fortify a principle. Read, for instance, those pages of his on the Catholic American literature of his time and you will have a standard of judgment for all time. And who to-

day can say what he says as well as he said it? As to those parts of his philosophy about which the doctors disagree, let us leave that to the doctors. It does not concern the general public, and indeed it might be left out of consideration with advantage.

Brownson's works are mines of thought. In them lie the germs of mighty sermons, of great books to come. Already he is a classic in American literature, and there is every reason why he should be a classic, since he was first in an untilled ground; and yet it is a sad thing to find that of all the magnificent material Brownson has left, the "Spirit Rapper," that comparatively least worthy product of his pen, seems to be the best known to the general reader.

If one of us would confine himself to the reading of four authors in English—Shakspere, Newman, Webster, and Brownson—he could not fail to be well educated. The "Idea of a University" of Newman is a pregnant book. It goes to the root of the subtlest matters; its clearness enters our minds and makes the shadows flee. It can-

not be made our own at one reading. There are passages which should be read over and over again—notably that on literature and the definition of a classic. If any man could make us grasp the intangible, Newman could. How sentimental and thin Emerson appears after him! Professor Cook, of Yale, has done the world a good turn by giving us the chapter on "Poetry and the Poetics of Aristotle" in a little pamphlet; and John Lilly's "Characteristics" is a very valuable book. Any reader or active man who dips into the chapter on the "Poetics" will long for more; and, if he does, the "Characteristics" will not slake his thirst; he will desire the volumes themselves and drink in new refreshments with every page.

I have known a young admirer of "Lead, Kindly Light"—which, by the way, has only three stanzas of its own—to be repelled by the learned title of "Apologia Pro Vita Sua," but, in search of the circumstances that helped to produce it, to turn to certain pages in this presumably uninteresting work. The charm began to work; Newman was no longer a

pedant to be avoided, but a friend to be ever near.

"Callista" amounts to very little as a novel; it is valuable because Newman studied its color from authentic sources. But "The Dream of Gerontius" is only beginning in our country to receive the attention due to it. It was a text-book in classes at Oxford long before people here touched it at all, except in rare instances. It is a unique poem. There is nothing like it in all literature. It is the record of the experience of a soul during the instant it is liberated from the body. It touches the sublime; it is colorless—if a pure white light can be said to be colorless. It is the work of a great logician impelled to utter his thoughts through the most fitting medium, and this medium he finds to be verse. In Dante the symbols of earthly things represent to us the mystic life of the other world. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, chief of the Pre-Raphaelites, imitated the outer shell of the great Dante—the sensuous shell—but he got no further. Newman soars above, beyond earth; we are

made to realize with awful force that the soul at death is at once divorced from the body. Dante does not make us feel this. The people that Virgil and he meet are not spirits, but men and women with bodies and souls in torment. No painter on earth could put "The Dream of Gerontius" into line and color. Flaxman, so exquisite in his interpretation of Dante, would seem vulgar, and Doré brutal. None of us should lack a knowledge of this truly wonderful poem, which must be studied, not read. Philosophy and theology have found no flaws in it; humanity may shiver in the whiteness of its light, and yet be consoled by the fact that the comfort it offers is not merely imaginative, or sentimental, or beautiful, but real.

It is impossible to suppress the love of the beautiful in human nature. The early New Englanders, to whom beauty was an offence and art and literature condemned things—who worshipped a God of their own invention, clothed in sulphurous clouds and holding victims over eternal fire, ready, with the ghastly pleasure described by their divines,

to drop these victims into the flame—were not Christians. Christians have never accepted the Grecian *dictum* that earthly beauty is the good and that to be æsthetic is to be moral; but Christianity has always encouraged the love of beauty and led the way to its use in the worship of God.

Among Americans, Longfellow had a most devout love of the beautiful. And it was this love of beauty that drew him near to the Church. That eloquent writer Ruskin has little sympathy with men who are drawn towards the Church by the beauty she enshrines, and he constantly protests against the enticements of a Spouse the hem of whose garment he kisses. Still, judging from his ill-natured diatribe against Pugin, in the "Stones of Venice," he had no understanding of the sentiment that caused Longfellow, when in search of inspiration, to turn to the Church.

Longfellow's love of the melodious, of the beautiful, of the symmetrical, led him into defects. He could not endure a discord, and his motto was "*Non clamor, sed amor*,"

which, as coming from him, may be paraphrased in one word, "serenity." His superabundant similes show how he longed to carry one thing into another thing of even greater beauty, and how this longing sometimes leads him to faults of taste.

But this lover of beauty—led by it to the very beauty of Ruskin's Circe and his forefathers' "Scarlet Woman"—came of a race that hated beauty. And yet he stretched out through the rocky soil of Puritan traditions and training until we find him translating the sermon of St. Francis of Assisi to the birds into English verse, and working lovingly at the most Christian of all poems, the "Divine Comedy." It was he—this descendant of the Puritans—who described, as no other poet ever described, the innocence of the young girl coming from confession. But it was his love of beauty and his love of purity that made him do this. In Longfellow's eyes only the pure was beautiful. A canker in the rose made the rose hateful to him. He was unlike his classmate and friend Hawthorne: the stain on the lily did

not make it more interesting. His love of purity was, however, like his hatred of noise, a sentiment rather than a conviction.

The love for the beautiful leads to Rome. Ruskin fights against it, Longfellow yields to it, and even Whittier—whose lack of culture and whose traditions held him doubly back—is drawn to the beauty of the saints.

As culture in America broadens and deepens, respect for the things that Protestantism cast out increases. James Russell Lowell's paper on Dante, in "Among My Books," is an example of this. The comprehension he shows of the divine poet is amazing in a son of the Puritans. But the human mind and the human heart *will* struggle towards the light.

Longfellow was too great an artist to try to lop off such Catholic traditions as might displease his readers. In this he was greater than Sir Walter Scott, and a hundred times greater than Spenser. Scott's mind, bending as a healthy tree bends to the light, stretched towards the old Church. She fascinated his imagination, she drew his thoughts, and her

beauty won his heart; but he was afraid of the English people. And yet, subservient as Scott was, Cardinal Newman avows that Sir Walter's novels drew him towards the Church; and there is a letter written by the great cardinal in which he laments that the youth of the nineteenth century no longer read the novels of the "Wizard of the North." Scott cannot get rid of the charm the Church throws about him. He was not classical, he was romantic. He soon tired of mere form, as any healthy mind will. The reticent and limited beauty of the Greek temple made him yawn; but he was never weary of the Gothic church, with its surprises, its splendor, its glow, its statues, its gargoyles—all its reproductions of the life of the world in its relations to God.

Similarly, Longfellow was not a classicist. The coldness of Greek beauty did not appeal to him; he could understand and love the pictures of Giotto—the artist of St. Francis—better than the "Dying Gladiator." When Christianity had given life to the perfect form of Greek art, then Longfellow under-

stood and loved it. And he trusted the American people sufficiently not to attempt to placate them by concealing or distorting the source of his inspiration. No casual reader of "Evangeline" can mistake the cause of the primitive virtues of the Acadians. A lesser artist would have introduced the typical Jesuit of the romancers, or hinted that a King James's Bible read by Gabriel and Evangeline, under the direction of a self-sacrificing colporteur, was at the root of all the patience, purity, and constancy in the poem. But Longfellow knew better than this, and the American people took "Evangeline" to their heart without question, except from some carper, like Poe, who envied the literary distinction of the poet. We must remember, too, that the American people of 1847 were not the American people of to-day; they were narrower, more provincial, less infused with new blood, and more prejudiced against the traditions of the Church to which Longfellow appealed when he wrote his greatest poem.

It is as impossible to eliminate the cross

from the discovery of America as to love art and literature without acknowledging the power that preserved both.

IX. Of Shakspere.

THE time has come when the Catholics of this country—who possess unmutilated the seamless garment of Christ—should begin to understand the real value of the inheritance of art and literature and music which is especially theirs.

The Reformation made a gulf between art and religion; it declared that the beautiful had no place in the service of God, and that a student of æsthetics was a student of the devil's lore. Of late a reaction has taken place.

Fifty years ago the picture of a Madonna by Raphael or Filippo Lippi or Botticelli in a popular magazine would have occasioned a howl of condemnation from the densely ignorant average Protestant of that time. But the taste for art has grown immensely in the last twenty years, and now—I am ashamed to say it—non-Catholics have, in

America, learned to know and love the great masterpieces of our inheritance more than we ourselves. It is we, English-speaking Catholics, who have suffered unexpressibly from the deadening influence of the Reformation on æsthetics. As a taste for art and literature grows, "orthodox" protest against the Church must wane, for the essence of "orthodox" protest is misunderstanding of the Church which made possible Dante and Cervantes, Chaucer and Wolfram von Eschenbach, Fra Angelico and Murillo, Shakspere and Dryden. And no cultivated man, loving them, can hate the Church that, while guarding morality, likewise protected æsthetics as a stretching out towards the immortal. Art and literature and music are efforts of the spirit to approach God. And, as such, Christianity cherishes them. Art and history are one; art and literature are history; and nothing is grander in the panorama of events than the spectacle of the fine arts, in Christian times, emptying their precious box of ointment on the head of Our Lord to atone for the sins of the past.

The flower of all art is Christian art; it took the perfect form of the Greeks and clothed it with luminous flesh and blood.

Miss Eliza Allen Starr has shown us some of the treasures of our inheritance of art. It is easy to find them; good photographs of the masters' works—of the Sistine Madonna of Raphael, of the Immaculate Conception of Murillo, of the Virgin of the Kiss by Hébert, and of the beautiful pictures of Bouguereau are cheap everywhere. Why, then, with all these lovely reflections of Catholic genius near us, should we fill our houses with bad, cheap prints?

Similarly, why should we be content with flimsy modern books? The best of all literature is ours—even Shakspere is ours.

If there is one fault to be found in Cardinal Newman's lecture on "Literature" in that great book, "The Idea of a University," it is that the most subtle master of English style took his view of Continental literature from Hallam. When he speaks of English literature, he speaks as a master of his subject; on the literature of the Greeks and

Romans, there is no uncertainty in his utterances; but he takes his impressions of the literature of France and Spain from a non-Catholic critic, whose opinions are tinctured with prejudice. One cannot help regretting that the cardinal did not apply the same test to Montaigne that he applied to Shakspere.

Similarly, most of us have been induced, by the Puritanism in the air around us, to take our opinions of the great English classics from text-books compiled by sciolists, who have not gone deep enough to understand the course of the currents of literature. We accept Shakspere at second hand; if we took our impressions of his works from Professor Dowden or Herr Delius or men like George Saintsbury or Horace Furness, or, better than all, from himself, it would be a different thing. But we do not; if we read him at all, we read him hastily; we read "Hamlet" as we would a novel, or we are content to nibble at little chunks from his plays, which the compilers graciously present to us.

The text-book of literature has been an enemy to education, because it has been generally compiled by persons who were incapable of fair judgment. In this country, Father Jenkins's compilation is the best we have had. It is a brave attempt to remove misapprehensions; but a text-book should be merely a guide to the works themselves. There is more intellectual gain in six months' close study of the text and circumstances of "Hamlet" than in tripping through a dozen books of "selections." The Germans found this out long ago, and Dr. Gotthold Böttcher puts it into fitting words in his introduction to Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parcival." The time will doubtless come when even in parochial schools the higher "Reader" will be a complete book—not a thing of shreds and patches, like the little dabs of meat and vegetables the keepers of country hotels set before us on small plates. This book will, of course, be intelligently annotated.

Some of us have a certain timidity about claiming Shakspere as our own and about reading his plays to our young people. This

is because we have given in too much to the critical spirit, which finds purity in impure things, and impurity where no impurity is intended. It is time we realize the evil that the English speech has done us by unconsciously impregnating us with alien prejudices.

Surely no man will accuse Cardinal Newman of condoning sensuality or coarseness. His idea of propriety is good enough; it is broad enough and narrow enough for us. That foreign code which would keep young people within artificial barriers and then let them loose to wallow in literary filth, that hypocritical American code which leaves the obscenities of the daily newspaper open and closes Shakspere, is not ours.

Shakspere was the result of Catholic thought and training. There is no Puritanism in him. His plays are Catholic literature in the widest sense; he sees life from the Christian point of view, and, depicting it as it is, his standard is a Catholic standard. There is no doubt that there are coarse passages in Shakspere's plays—it is easy to

get rid of them. But they are few. They seem immodest because the plainness of language of the Elizabethan time and of the preceding times has happily gone out of fashion. It would be well to revise our definition of immorality, by comparing it with the more robust Catholic one, before we condemn Shakspere or the Old Testament, though the scrupulous Tom Paine, who has gone utterly out of fashion, found both immoral!

Hear Cardinal Newman ("Idea of a University," page 319) speaking of Shakspere: "Whatever passages may be gleaned from his dramas disrespectful to ecclesiastical authority, still these are but passages; on the other hand, there is in Shakspere neither contempt of religion nor scepticism, and he upholds the broad laws of moral and divine truths with the consistency and severity of an Æschylus, Sophocles, and Pindar. There is no mistaking in his works on which side lies the right; Satan is not made a hero, nor Cain a victim, but pride is pride, and vice is vice, and, whatever indulgence he may allow

himself in light thoughts or unseemly words, yet his admiration is reserved for sanctity and truth; . . . but often as he may offend against modesty, he is clear of a worse charge, sensuality, and hardly a passage can be instanced, in all that he has written to seduce the imagination or to excite the passions."

In arranging a course of reading for young people, it seems to me that those books which *define* principles should be put first. When a reader has a good grasp of definitions, he is in a mathematical state of mind and ready to assimilate truth and reject error. Books of literature should not be recommended to him until he is sure of his principles; for, unhappily, the tendency of American youth is to imagine that what he cannot refute is irrefutable. If the young reader be thoroughly grounded in the doctrines of his faith and armed with a few clear definitions of the meaning of things, even Milton cannot persuade him that Satan is a more admirable figure than Our Lord, or Byron seduce him into the opinion that Cain

was wronged, or Goethe that sin is merely a more or less pleasing experience.

It is remarkable that the Puritanism which lauds Milton as a household god turns its face from Shakspere; and yet Milton's great epic is not only the deification of intellectual pride, but it contemns Christianity. There are very few men who can to-day say that they have read "Paradise Lost" line after line with pleasure. There are long stretches of aridity in it; and those who pretend to admire it as a whole are no doubt tinctured with literary insincerity. But there are glorious passages in the "Paradise Lost," unexcelled in any literature; and therefore the epic should be read in parts, and one cannot be blamed if he "skip" many other parts. The great parts of "Paradise Lost," ought to be read and re-read. The comparative weakness of the "Paradise Regained" shows that Milton had not that sympathy with the Redemption which he had with the revolt of Satan. And yet, in some pious households, where puritanized opinion reigns, Shakspere is locked up,

while "Paradise Lost" is put beside the family Bible!

It is not necessary that one should read all of Shakspere's writings; the early poems had better be omitted; but it is necessary for purposes of culture that one should read what one does read with intelligence. Before beginning "Hamlet"—which a thoughtful Catholic can appreciate better than any other man—one should clear the ground by studying Professor Dowden's little "Primer" on Shakspere (Macmillan & Co.), and Mr. Furnivall's preface to the Leopold edition of Shakspere, and George H. Miles's study of "Hamlet." Then, and not until then, will one be in a position to get real benefit from his reading. To read "Hamlet" without some preparation is like the inane practice of "going to Europe to complete an education never begun at home." I repeat that a Catholic can better appreciate the marvels of Shakspere's greatest play, because, even if he know only the Little Catechism, he has the key to the play and to Shakspere's mind.

The philosophy of "Hamlet" is that sin cankers and burns and ruins and corrupts even in this world, and that the effects do not end in this world. Shakspere, enlightened by the teaching of centuries since St. Austin converted his forefathers, teaches a higher philosophy than that of Æschylus or Euripides or Sophocles—he substitutes will for fate. It is not fate that forces the keen Claudius to murder his brother; it is not fate that obliges him to turn away from the reproaches of an instructed mind and conscience: he chooses; it is his own will that makes the crime; he does not confuse good with evil. The sin of the Queen is not so great; she is ignorant of her husband's crime; in fact, from the usual modern point of view, she has committed no sin at all. And, as the Danish method of choosing monarchs permitted the nobles to name Claudius king, while her son was mooning at the Saxon university, she had done him no material wrong. But as there is no mention of a dispensation from Rome, and as Shakspere makes the Danes Catholic, the

people of Denmark must have looked on the alliance with doubt. The demand made to Horatio to exorcise the spirit, as he was a scholar; the expression, "I'll cross it," which Fechter, the actor, rightly interpreted as meaning the sign of the cross; a hundred touches, in fact, show that "Hamlet" can and ought to be studied with special profit by Catholics.

Suppose that one begins with "Hamlet," having cleared the ground, and then takes the greatest of the tragi-comedies, "The Merchant of Venice." Here opens a new field. Before beginning this play, it would be well to read Mgr. Seton's paper on the Jews in Europe, in his excellent "Essays, Chiefly Roman." It will give one an excellent idea of the attitude of the Church towards Shylock's countrymen, and do away with the impression that Antonio was acting in accordance with that attitude when he treated Shylock as less than a human being. Portia not only offers a valuable contrast to the weakness of Ophelia and the criminal weakness of Gertrude, but she is a type of the

ideal noblewoman of her time, whose only weakness is love for a man of lesser nobility than herself, but who holds his honor as greater than life or love.

Shakspere's "Julius Cæsar," for comparison with "Hamlet," might come next, and after that the most lyrical and poetical of all the comedies, "As You Like It," or perhaps "The Tempest," with Prospero's simple but strong assertion of belief in immortality.

Having studied these four great works, with as much of the literature they suggest as practicable, a distinct advance in cultivation will have been made. The best college in the country can give one no more. But they must be *studied*, not read. He who does not know these plays misses part of his heritage; for the plays of Shakspere belong more to the Catholic than to the non-Catholic. Shakspere was the fine flower of culture nurtured under Catholic influences.

X. Of Talk, Work, and Amusement.

THERE are too many etiquette books—too much about the outward look of things, and too little about the inward. Manners make a great difference in this world—we all discover that sooner or later; but later we find out that there are some principles which keep society together more than manners. If manners are the flower, these principles are the roots which intricately bind earth and crumbling rocks together and make a safe footing. To-day the end of preaching seems to be to teach the outward form, without the inward light that gives the form all its value. By preaching I mean the talk and advice that permeate the newspapers and books of social instruction.

Manners are only good, after all, when they represent something. What does it matter whether Mr. Jupiter makes a charming host at his own table or not, if he sit silent a few

minutes after some of his guests are gone, and listen to the horrors that one who stays behind tells of them? And if Mrs. Juno, whose manners at her "at home" are perfect, sits down and rips and tears at the characters of the acquaintances she has just fed with coffee and whatever else answers to the fatted calf, shall we believe that she is useful to society?

There is harmless gossip which has its place; in life it is like the details in a novel; it is amusing and interesting, because it belongs to humanity—and what that is human is alien to us? So far as gossip concerns the lights and shades of character, the minor miseries and amusing happenings of life, what honest man or woman has not a taste for it? And who values a friend less because his peculiarities make us smile?

But by and by there comes into the very corner of the fireside a guest who disregards the crown of roses which every man likes to hang above his door. The roses mean silence—or, at least, that all things that pass under them shall be sweetened by the breath

of hospitality; and he adds a little to the smile of kindly tolerance, and he paints it as a sneer. "You must forgive me for telling you," he whispers, when he is safely sheltered beneath your friend's garland of roses; "but Theseus spoke of you the other night in a way that made my blood boil."

And then the friendship of years is snapped; and then the harmless jest, in which Theseus's friend would have delighted even at his own expense if he had been present, becomes a jagged bullet in an ulcerated wound. *Sub rosâ* was a good phrase with the old Latins, but who minds it now? It went out of fashion when the public began to pay newspaper reporters for looking through keyholes, and for stabbing the hearts of the innocent in trying to prove somebody guilty. It went out of fashion when private letters became public property and a man might, without fear of disgrace, print, or sell to be printed, any scrap of paper belonging to another that had fallen into his hands.

A very wise man—a gentle man and a loyal man—once said, "A man may be judged by

what he believes." If we could learn the truth of this early in life, what harm could be done us by the creature who tears the thorns out of our hospitable roses, and goes about lacerating hearts with them? When we hear that Jason has called us a fool, we should not be so ready to cry out with all our breath that he is a scoundrel—because we should not be so ready to believe that Jason, who was a decent fellow yesterday, should suddenly have become the hater of a good friend to-day. And when, under stress of unrighteous indignation, we have called Jason a scoundrel, the listener can hardly wait until he has informed Jason of the enormity; "and thereby hangs a tale."

But when we get older and wiser, we do not ask many people to sit under our roses; and those whom we ask we trust implicitly. In time—so happily is our experience—we believe no evil of any man with whom we have ever cordially shaken hands. Then we begin to enjoy life; and we, too, choose our acquaintances by their unwillingness to believe evil of others. And as for the man

who has eaten our salt, we become so optimistic about him that we would not even believe that he could write a stupid book; and that is the *nirvâna* of belief in one's friends.

Less manners, we pray—less talk about the handling of a fork and the angle of a bow, and more respect for the roses. Of course, one of us may have said yesterday, after dinner, that Jason ought not to talk so much about his brand-new coat-of-arms; or that Ariadne, who was a widow, you know, might cease to chant the praise of number one in the presence of number two. But do we not admire the solid qualities of both Jason and Ariadne? And yet who shall make them believe that when the little serpent wriggles from our hearthstone to theirs?

It is a settled fact that young people must be amused. It is a settled fact, or rather an accepted fact, that they must be amused much more than their predecessors were amused. It is useless to ask why. Life in the United States has become more complicated, more artificial, more civilized, if you

will; and that Jeffersonian simplicity which De Tocqueville and De Bacourt noted has almost entirely disappeared. The theatre has assumed more license than ever; it amuses—it does not attempt to instruct; and spectacles are tolerated by decent people which would have been frowned upon some years ago. There is no question that the drama is purer than it ever was before; but the spectacle, the idiotic farce, and the light opera are more silly and more indecent than within the memory of man. The toleration of these things all shows that, in the craving for amusement, high principle and reasonable rules of conduct are forgotten.

A serious question of social importance is: How can the rage for amusement be kept within proper bounds? How can it be regulated? How can it be prevented from making the heart and the head empty and even corrupt? In many ways our country and our time are serious enough. We need, perhaps, a touch of that cheerful lightness which makes the life of the Viennese and of the Parisian agreeable and bright—which

enables him to get color and interest into the most commonplace things. But our lightness and cheerfulness are likely to be spasmodic and extravagant. We are not pleased with little things; it takes a great deal to give us delight; our children are men and women too early; we do not understand simplicity—unless it is sold at a high price with an English label on it. Luxuries have become necessities, and even the children demand refinements of enjoyment of which their parents did not dream in the days gone by.

And yet the essence of American social life ought to be simplicity. We have no traditions to support; a merely rich man without a great family name owes nothing to society, except to help those poorer than himself; he has not inherited those great establishments which your English or Spanish high lord must keep up or tarnish the family name. We have no great families in America whose traditions are not those of simplicity and honesty, and these are the only traditions they are bound to cherish.

In this way our aristocracy—if we have such a thing—ought to be the purest in the world and the most simple. There is no reason why we should pick up all the baubles that the effete folk of the Old World are throwing away.

Whether we are to achieve simplicity, and consequently cheerfulness, in every-day life depends entirely on the women. It is remarkable how many Catholic women bred in good schools enter society and run a mad race in search of frivolities. In St. Francis de Sales's "Letters to People in the World" there is a record of a lady "who had long remained in such subjection to the humors of her husband, that in the very height of her devotions and ardors she was obliged to wear a low dress, and was all loaded with vanity outside; and, except at Easter, could never communicate unless secretly and unknown to every one—and yet she rose high in sanctity."

But St. Francis de Sales had other words for those women of the world who rushed into all the complications of luxury, and yet

who defended their frivolity by the phrase "duty to society." The woman who serves her children best serves society. And she best serves her children by cultivating her heart and mind to the utmost; and by teaching them that one of the best things in life is simplicity, and that it is much easier to be a Christian when one is content with a little than when one is constantly discontented with a great deal. If the old New England love for simplicity in the ordinary way of life could be revived among Catholics, and sanctified by the amiable spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, the world would be a better place.

Father Faber tells us what even greater men have told us before—that each human being has his vocation in life. And we nearly all accept it as true, but the great difficulty is to realize it. Ruskin says that work is not a curse; but that a man must like his work, feel that he can do it well, and not have too much of it to do. The sum of all this means that he shall be contented in his work, and find his chief satisfaction in doing it well.

It is not what we do, but *how* we do it, that makes success.

The greatest enemy to a full understanding of the word vocation among Americans is the belief that it means solely the acquirement of money. And the reason for this lies not in the character of the American—who is no more mercenary than other people—but in the idea that wealth is within the grasp of any man who works for it. The money standard, therefore, is the standard of success. But success to the eyes of the world is not always success to the man himself. The accumulation of wealth often leaves him worn-out, dissatisfied, with a feeling that he has somehow missed the best of life. That man has probably missed his vocation and done the wrong thing, in spite of the opinion outside of himself that he has succeeded.

The frequent missing of vocations in life is due to false ideas about education. The parent tries to throw all the responsibility of education on the teacher, and the teacher has no time for individual moulding. A boy

grows up learning to read and to write, like other boys. He may be apt with his head or his hands, but how few parents see the aptitude in the right light! It ought to be considered and seriously cultivated. The tastes of youth may not always be indications of the future: they often change with circumstances and surroundings. But they are just as often unerring indications of the direction in which the child's truest success in the world will lie. If a boy play at swinging a censer when he is little, or enjoy the sight of burning candles on a toy altar, it is not an infallible sign that he will be a priest. And yet the rosary that young Newman drew on his slate, when he was a boy, doubtless meant something.

"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," Longfellow sings. He who comprehends them gets near to the heart of youth. But who tries to do it? The boy is as great an enigma to his father, as a rule, as the old sphinx in the Egyptian desert is to passing travellers. And who but his father ought to have the key to the boy's mind, and

find his way into its recesses so gently and carefully that the question of his child's vocation would be an easy one for him to answer?

If the religious vocations in this country are not equal in number to what they ought to be, we may attribute it to these two causes: the general desire to make money, and the placid indifference of parents. A boy is sent to "school"—school implying a sort of factory from which human creatures are turned out polished and finished, but not ready for any special work in a world which demands specialists. And what is specialism but the industrious working out of a vocation?

God is very good to a man when that man is true to his vocation. To be content in one's work is almost happiness. To do one's work for the eyes of God is to be as near happiness as any creature can come to it in this world. Fortunate are they who, like the old sculptors of the roof of "the cathedral over sea," learn early in life, as Miss Eleanor Donnelly puts it,—

"That nothing avails us under the sun,
In word or in work, save that which is done
For the honor and glory of God alone."

Direction and coercion are two different things. The parents who mistake one for the other make a fatal error. Direction is the flower, coercion the weed that grows beside it, and kills its strength and sweetness.

The true gospel of work begins with the consideration of vocation, and the prayers and the appeals to the sacraments that ought to accompany it. This is the genesis of that gospel. It is true that if a man can be helped to take care of the first twenty years of his life, the last twenty years will take care of him. Those who find their vocation are blessed—

"And they are the sculptors whose works shall last,
Whose names shall shine as the stars on high,
When deep in the dust of a ruined past
The labors of selfish souls shall lie."

XI. The Little Joys of Life.

HAS enthusiasm gone out of fashion? Are the young no longer hero-worshippers? A recent writer complains of the sadness of American youth. "The absence of animal spirits among our well-to-do young people is a striking contrast to the exuberance of that quality in most European countries," says this author, in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Our young people laugh very much, but they are not, as a rule, cheerful; and they are amiable only when they "feel like being amiable." This is the most fatal defect in American manners among the young. The consideration for others shown only when a man is entirely at peace with himself is not politeness at all: it is the most unrefined manifestation of selfishness.

Before we condemn the proverbial artificiality of the French, let us contrast it with

the brutality of the average carper at this artificiality. "A Frenchman," he will say, "will lift his hat to you, but he would not give you a sou if you were starving." Let us take that assertion for its full value. We are not starving; we do not want his sou, but we do want to have our every-day life made as pleasant as possible. And is your average brutal and bluff and uncivilized creature the more anxious to give his substance to the needy because he is ready on all occasions to tread on the toes of his neighbor? He holds all uttered pleasant things to be lies, and the suppression of the brutal a sin against truth. One sees this personage too often not to understand him well. He is half civilized. King Henry VIII. was of this kind—charming, bluff old fellow, bubbling over with truth and frankness, slapping Sir Thomas More on the back, and full of delicious horseplay, when his dinner agreed with him! It is easy to comprehend that the high politeness of the best of the French is the result of the finest civilization. No wonder Talleyrand looked back and said

that no man really enjoyed life who had not lived before the Revolution.

But why should enthusiasm have gone out? Why should the young have no heroes? Have the newspaper joke, the levity of Ingersoll and the irreverence of the stump-speakers, the cynicism of *Puck* and the insolence of *Judge*, driven out enthusiasm? George Washington is mentioned—what inextinguishable laughter follows!—the cherry-tree, the little hatchet! What novel wit that name suggests! One *must* laugh, it is so funny! And, then, the scriptural personages! The paragraphers have made Job so very amusing; and Joseph and Daniel!—how stupid people must be who do not roar with laughter at the mere mention of these august names!

Cannot this odious, brutal laughter, which is not manly or womanly, be stopped? Ridicule cannot kill it, but an appeal to all the best feelings of the human heart might; for all the best feelings of the human heart are outraged. How funny death has become! When shall we grow tired of the joke about

the servant who lighted the fire with kerosene, and went above; or the quite too awfully comical *jeu d'esprit* about the boy who ate green apples, and is no more? These jokes are in the same taste that would put the hair of a skeleton into curl-papers. Still we laugh.

A nation without reverence has begun to die: its feet are cold, though it may still grin. A nation whose youth are without enthusiasm has no future beyond the piling up of dollars. It is not so with our country yet; but the fact remains: enthusiasm is dying, and hero-worship needs revival.

One can easily understand why, among Catholics, there is not as much hero-worship as there ought to be. It is because our greatest heroes are not even mentioned in current literature, and because they are not well presented to our young people. St. Francis Xavier was a greater hero than Nelson; yet Nelson is popularly esteemed the more heroic, because Southey wrote his life well. But St. Francis's life is written for the mystic, for the devotee. It is right, of

course; but our young people are not all mystics or devotees; consequently St. Francis seems afar off—a saint to be vaguely remembered, but nothing more.

If the saints whose heroism appeals most to the young could be brought nearer to the natural young person, they would soon be as friends, daily companions—heroes, not distant beings whose halos guard them from contact. One need only know St. Francis of Assisi to be very fond of him. He had a sense of humor, too, but no sense of levity. And yet the only readable life of this hero and friend has been written by a Protestant. (I am not recommending it, for there are some things which Mrs. Oliphant does not understand.) And there is St. Ignatius Loyola. And there is St. Charles Borromeo —*that* was a man! And St. Philip Neri, who had a sense of humor, and was entirely civilized at the same time. And St. Francis of Sales! His "Letters to Persons in the World" make one wish that he had not died so soon. What tact, what knowledge of the world! How well he persuades

people without diplomacy, by the force of a fine nature open to the grace of God!

Our young people need only know the saints—not out of Alban Butler's sketches, but illumined with reality—to be filled with an enthusiasm which Carlyle would have had them waste on the wrong kind of heroes.

One of the most interesting pictures of a priest in American literature—which of late abounds in pictures of good priests—is that of Père Michaux, in Miss Woolson's novel "Anne." He believed that "all should live their lives, and that one should not be a slave to others; that the young should be young, and that some natural, simple pleasure should be put into each twenty-four hours. They might be poor, but children should be made happy; they might be poor, but youth should not be overwhelmed by the elders' cares; they might be poor, but they could have family love around the poorest hearthstone; and there was always time for a little pleasure, if they would seek it simply and moderately."

But Père Michaux was French: he had not been corrupted by that American Puritanism which has, somehow or other, got into the blood of even the Irish Celts on this side of the Atlantic. Pleasures are not spontaneous or simple, and joy is only possible after a long period of worry. Simple pleasures—the honest little wild-flowers that peep up between the every-day crevices of each twenty-four hours—are neglected because we have not been taught to see them. Life may be serious without being sad; but, influenced by the Puritan gloom, sadness and seriousness have come to be confounded.

Man was not made to be sad. Unless something is wrong with him, he is not sad by temperament. And sadness ought to be repressed in early youth. The sad child in the stories is pathetic, but the authors generally have the good sense to kill him when he is young. The sad child in real life ought not to be tolerated. And if his parents have made him sad by putting their burden of the trials of life on him so early, they have done him irreparable wrong. Simple pleasures are

the sunlight of life; and the little plants struggle to the sunshine and find light for themselves, darken their dwelling-place as you will. The frown in the household, the scolding voice, the impatience with childish folly—all these things are against the practice of the Church and her saints. The Catholic sentiment is one of joy—not the Sabbath any more, but the Sunday, the day of smiles, of rejoicing; the day on which, as old Christian legends have it, the sun is supposed to dance in honor of the first Easter.

How much the French and Germans, who have not lost the Catholic traditions, make of the little joys of life! If the grandfather's name-day come, there is the pot of flowers, the little cake with its ornaments. And how many other feasts are made by the poorest of them out of what the Americans, rich by comparison, would look on but as a patch upon his poverty! There should be no dark days for the young. It is so easy to make them happy, if they have not been distorted by their surroundings out of the capability of enjoying little pleasures. The mother who

teaches her daughters that poverty is not death to all joy, and that the enjoyment of simple things makes life easier and keeps people younger—such a mother is kinder to her girls, gives them a better gift than the diamond necklace which the spoiled girl craves, and then finds good only so far as it excites envy in others.

Children should not be made to bear a weight of sadness. That girl will not long for an electric doll if she has been taught to get the poetry of life out of a rag-baby. And the boy will not pine for an improved bicycle, and sulk without it, if he has learned to swim. The greatest pleasures are the easiest had—

"Each ounce of dross costs an ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay;
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis Heaven alone that is given away,—
'Tis only God may be had for the asking."

Those who have suffered and borne suffering best are the most anxious that the young should enjoy the simple joys of life. Like this Père Michaux, they look for a little

pleasure in each twenty-four hours. Is it a wild rose laid by a plate at the simple dinner, a new story, a romp, ungrudging permission for some small relaxation of the ordinary rules, or a brave attempt to keep sorrow away from the young? No matter; it is a little thing done for the Holy Child and for childhood, that ought to be holy and joyous.

There is a commercial axiom that declares that we get out of anything just as much as we put into it. This may be true in trade or not; it is certainly true of other things in life.

When the frost begins to make the blood tingle, and the glow of neighborly fires has more than usual comfort for the passer-by, as he sees them through windows and thinks of his own, the fragrance of home seems to rise more strongly than ever, and then there is a longing that the home-circle may revolve around a common centre. Sometimes this longing takes the form of resolutions to make life more cheerful; and sometimes even the father wonders if he, in some way,

cannot make home more attractive. As a rule, however, he leaves it to the mother; and if the young people yawn and want to go out, it must be her fault. The truth is, he expects to reap without having sown.

Home can be made cheerful only by an effort. Why, even friendship and love will perish if they are not cultivated; and so if the little virtues of life—the little flowers—are not carefully tended they must die. Young people cannot be imprisoned or kept at home by force. We cannot get over the change that has come about—a change that has eliminated the old iron hand and rod from family life. We must take things as they are. And the only way to direct the young, to influence, to help them, is to interest them.

Books are resources and consolation; study is a resource and consolation. Both are strong factors in the best home-life; and the man who can look back with gratitude to the time when, around the home-lamp, he made one of the circle about his father's table, has much to be thankful for; and we

venture to assert that the coming man whose father will give him such a remembrance to be thankful for can never be an outcast, or grow cold, or bitter, or cynical.

But the taste for books does not come always by nature: it must be cultivated. And everything between covers is not a book; and a taste for books cannot be cultivated in a bookless house. It may be said that there is no Catholic literature, or that it is very expensive to buy books, or that it is difficult to get a small number of the best books, or to be sure that one has the best in a small compass.

None of these things is true—none of them. There is a vast Catholic literature, and a vast literature, not professedly Catholic, which is good and pure, which will stimulate a desire for study, and help to cultivate every quality of the mind and heart. Does anybody realize how many good books twelve or fifteen dollars will buy nowadays? And, after all, there are not fifty really *great* books in all languages. If one have fifty books, one has the best literature in all

languages. A book-shelf thus furnished is a treasure which neither adversity nor fatigue nor sickness itself can take away. Each child may even have his own book-shelf, with his favorites on it, and such volumes as treat of his favorite hobby—for every child old enough should have a hobby, even if it be only the collecting of pebbles, and every chance should be given to enjoy his hobby and to develop it into a serious study. A little fellow who used to range his pebbles on the table in the lamplight, and get such hints as he could about them out of an old text-book, is a great geologist. And a little girl who used to hang over her very own copy of Adelaide Procter's poems is spoken of as one of the cleverest newspaper men (though she is a woman) in the city of New York. The taste of the early days, encouraged in a humble way, became the talent which was to make their future.

There should be no bookless house in all this land—least of all among Catholics, whose ancestors in Christ preserved all that is great in literature. Let the trashy novels,

paper-backed, soiled, borrowed or picked up, be cast out. Let the choosing of books not be left to mere chance. A little brains put into it will be returned with more than its first value. What goes into the precious minds of the young ought not to be carelessly chosen. And it is true that, in the beginning, it is the easiest possible thing to interest young people in good and great books. But if one lets them wallow in whatever printed stuff happens to come in their way, one finds it hard to conduct them back again. Let the books be carefully chosen —a few at a time—be laid within the circle of the evening lamp—and God bless you all!

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